

Who is Alahazrat ?

An Introduction to the life and work of Imam Ahmad Rida Khan al-Baraylawi



ABU HASAN

RIDAWI

PRESS

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BIOGRAPHIES

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رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على سيد المرسلين وعلى آله الطيبين وأصحابه الطاهرين

The Reviver of Islām, grandmaster of tafsīr, ḥadīth and fiqh, peerless Ḥanafī jurist of his time, vanquisher of innovators and enemies of religion, foremost defender of faith and the imām of Sunnis, polymath, poet, teacher, mufti, gnostic, guide Mawlānā Aḥmad Ridā Khān al-Ḥanafī al-Qādiri al-Baraylawī, famously known as Alahazrat in the subcontinent was born in 1272 (1856) in Bareilly,¹ a prominent city of Uttar Pradesh state in North India. His grandfather named him *Al-Mukhtār* at birth.²



¹ Bareilly is located at 28°10'N, 78°23'E, and is situated in the north of India, 250 km from New Delhi. It borders Pilibhit and Shahjahanpur on East and Rampur on west, Udham Singh Nagar (Uttarakhand) in the north and Badaun in the south.

² It was a common practice to name children with a chronogram at birth. *Al-Mukhtār*=1272.

Alahazrat, meaning ‘Grand Master,’ was a common title of respect³ in the 13th/14th century Hijri. Imām Aḥmad Ridā was called Alahazrat as he was a major force against innovators and the leader of Sunni scholars. This title became so famous, that it has now become a synonym for Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān. Upon his second and eventful visit to Arabia in 1323, scholars of the two sanctuaries – Makkah and Madinah – were so impressed by his erudition and his efforts to safeguard Ahl as-Sunnah, that prominent scholars hailed him as the Reviver of Religion.⁴ Major scholars in (undivided) India also agreed that all the qualities required in a Reviver were found in him and thus he is the Mujaddid of the 14th century after the Prophet’s ﷺ migration. Imām Aḥmad Ridā referred to himself as *Ábd al-Muṣṭafā* or *the slave of the Prophet* ﷺ.

Family

His father, Mawlānā Naqī Álī Khān⁵ was the son of Mawlānā Muḥammad Ridā Álī Khān,⁶ the son of Ḥāfiẓ Kāzim Álī Khān, the son of Shaykh Muḥammad Aázam Khān, the son of Muḥammad Sáadat Yār Khān Bahādur, a Pathan of the Barech⁷ tribe in Qandahār, Afghanistan, who first came to Rohilkhand, Bareilly on an imperial mission and eventually settled there. Sáadat Yār Khān was a *Shash Hazārī*⁸ commander who was appointed as the administrator of Bareilly after his victory in an important battle, but he never took the office as he was on his death-bed when the royal decree arrived. His three sons, Aázam Khān, Muázẓam Khān and Mukarram Khān also held important positions in the Mughal Empire. Shaykh Aázam Khān withdrew from the world and became an ascetic; he retired to Bareilly and settled there. His son Ḥāfiẓ Kāzim Álī Khān was a scholar and held the post of District Administrator in the final years of the Mughal Empire. Ḥāfiẓ Kāzim’s son, Mawlānā Ridā Álī Khān was also a prominent *mufti*, and from his time onward the family has produced

³ Similar to "His Highness," "His Majesty," "His Holiness," etc.

⁴ *Mujaddid*. It is related from tradition, that an erudite scholar will appear at the head of every century and revive the religion and clarify doubts and fight innovation.

⁵ Naqī Álī Khān 1246-1297 AH (1830-1880)

⁶ Ridā Álī Khān 1224-1282 AH (1809-1866)

⁷ The Barech/Bareach is a tribal group of Rohilla Afghans in North India.

⁸ A commander of six thousand troops.

distinguished muftis and scholars, Alahazrat being the most famous and arguably the most brilliant among them all. Alahazrat had two younger brothers: Ḥasan Ridā Khān,⁹ Muḥammad Ridā Khān, and three sisters.

Marriage and Children

Alahazrat married in 1291. He had two sons and five daughters and both his sons Mawlānā Ḥāmid Ridā Khān¹⁰ and Mawlānā Muṣṭafā Ridā Khān¹¹ were accomplished scholars, authors, teachers and spiritual guides. Mawlānā Ḥāmid's son, Mawlānā Ibrāhīm Ridā¹² was also a prominent scholar and among his children, Mawlānā Akhtar Ridā Khān¹³ is a senior Sunni scholar and currently heads the *Dār-al-Iftā* in Bareilly. Mawlānā Akhtar is a graduate of Al-Azhar University (hence *Azhari Miyāñ*) and has many published works which include translations of Alahazrat's books from and into Arabic.

Madh'hab and Tariqah

Imām Aḥmad Ridā was the imām of Ḥanafīs in his time; his knowledge of Ḥanafī fiqh and its principles was unparalleled among his peers and remains unmatched until now. His magesterial command of Ḥanafī fiqh is evident from his fatāwā, and annotations on Ḥanafī works, which compelled even antagonists to acknowledge his mastery in the discipline:

...in his time, it was rare to find a scholar of his class with such extensive knowledge of Ḥanafī fiqh, its constituents, minutiae and its nuances – a testimony for which can be found in his collection of fatāwā and his book *Kifl al-Faqīh al-Fāhīm Fī Aḥkāmī Qirtās al-Darāhīm*, which he wrote in Makkah in the year 1323 AH.¹⁴

Alahazrat took the Qādiri path from Sayyid Aāl e Rasūl Aḥmadī Mārahrawī along with his father in the year 1295.

⁹ Mawlānā Ḥasan Ridā Khān was also a scholar and a poet; *Zawq e Naāt* is an anthology of his poetry in the praise of the Prophet ﷺ.

¹⁰ Ḥujjatu'l Islām Mawlānā Ḥāmid Ridā Khān, 1292-1362 (1875-1942).

¹¹ Muftī Aāzam e Hind Mawlānā Muṣṭafā Ridā Khān, 1310-1402 (1892-1981).

¹² Mawlānā Ibrāhīm Ridā Khan 1325-1385 AH (1907-1965).

¹³ Born 25th Safar 1362 AH.

¹⁴ Abu'l Ḥasan Ālī al-Nadawī, *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir* 8/1182.

Teachers

His grandfather was his first teacher. In his early years, he was also taught by a teacher in Bareilly and thereafter he was instructed by Mawlānā Ghulām Qādir Beyg and Mawlānā Ábd al-Áliy Rampūrī. Shāh Abu'l Ĥusayn Nūrī was his guide in ṭaṣawwuf. Most of the traditional syllabus¹⁵ was taught by his own father, Mawlānā Naqī Áli Khān, who also authorised him to issue fatāwā in his fourteenth year.¹⁶ Alahazrat was an autodidact who mastered other sciences by self-instruction. His teachers and those who gave him authorisations in ḥadīth, fiqh and ṭaṣawwuf are:

1. Shāh Sayyid Aāl e Rasūl Marahrahwī¹⁷ [d. 1297/1880]
2. Mawlānā Muḥammad Naqī Áli Khān [d. 1297/1880]
3. Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Zaynī Daḥlān¹⁸ al-Makki [d.1299/1881]
4. Shaykh Ábd al-Raḥmān Sirāj al-Makki [d.1301/1883]
5. Shaykh Ĥusayn ibn Ṣāliḥ Jamal al-Layl [d.1302/1884]
6. Shaykh Abu'l Ĥusayn Aḥmad al-Nūrī [d. 1324/1906]
7. Mirzā Ghulām Qādir Beyg¹⁹ al-Baraylawi [d. 1336/1917]
8. Mawlānā Ábd al-Áliy al-Rampūrī [d.1303/1885]

Alahazrat received authorisations in thirteen different chains of *ṭarīqah*, which he also forwarded by granting authorisations to others.

¹⁵ *Dars e Nizāmī*

¹⁶ Alahazrat himself states that his age was 13 years and 10 months at that time.

¹⁷ Passed away in 1296 (1879). The shaykh was a prominent student of the famous muḥaddith, Ḥanafī imām and Mujaddid of the thirteenth century, Shah Ábd al-Ázīz al-Dihlawī, the son of Shāh Waliyullāh Aḥmad al-Dihlawī.

¹⁸ The Chief Mufti of Makkah of his day, and the author of *Al-Durar al-Saniyyah*, *Futūḥāt al-Islāmiyyah*, *Sharḥ al-Ízzī*, etc.

¹⁹ Alahazrat's enemies falsely insinuate that he was the brother of Mirza Ghulam Aḥmad Qadiyani of Punjab, the false-prophet and the founder of the Qadiyani faith. This shaykh is Mirza Ghulām Qādir Beyg son of Mirza Ḥasan Jān Beyg, born in 1242 (1827) in Lucknow. His father relocated to Bareilly. He was a close friend of Alahazrat's father and passed away in his nineties in Bareilly in 1336 (1917).

Famous Students and Spiritual Heirs

Graduating from a famous school is deemed an accomplishment. Being the student of a great teacher is a noteworthy achievement; and to be the mentor of great achievers is a mark of distinction. Alahazrat left behind many disciples who were not only great men themselves, but were also mentors to many more high achievers. The following are his most prominent students – and every one of them was an institution:

1. His eldest son, Mawlānā Ḥāmid Ridā Khān²⁰ (d. 1362/1943)
2. His second son, Mawlānā Muṣṭafā Ridā Khān²¹ (d. 1402/1981)
3. Mawlānā Amjad Ālī Aázamī²² (d. 1367/1948)
4. Mawlānā Sayyid Nayīmuddīn Murādābādī²³ (d. 1367/1948)
5. Mawlānā Sayyid Żafaruddīn Bihārī²⁴ (d. 1382/1962)
6. Mawlānā Sayyid Aḥmad Ashraf Kichauchawī (d. 1343/1925)
7. Mawlānā Sayyid Dīdār Ālī Alwārī²⁵ (d. 1354/1935)
8. Mawlānā Aḥmad Mukhtār Şiddīqī Meeruti (d. 1357/1938)
9. Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad al-Kichauchawī²⁶ (d.1383/1961)
10. Mawlānā Ābd al-Ālīm Siddīqī Meeruti (d. 1374/1954)
11. Mawlānā Ābd al-Salām Jabalpūrī (d. 1372/1953)
12. Mawlānā Ābd al-Aḥad Pīlībhītī (d. 1348/1929)
13. Mawlānā Diyāuddīn Aḥmad al-Madanī²⁷ (d.1401/1981)

²⁰ *Ḥujjatu'l Islām* .

²¹ *Muftī Aázam e Hind*.

²² *Şadru'sh Shariáh*, the author of *Bahar e Shariat*.

²³ *Şadru'l Afāḍil*, teacher of scholars and author; *Khazāyinu'l Īrfān* is his work.

²⁴ *Malik al-Ūlama*, Alahazrat's scribe and author of *Ḥayāt e Alahazrat* and *Şaḥīḥ al-Bihārī*.

²⁵ Founder of *Ḥizbu'l Aḥnāf*, Lahore.

²⁶ *Muḥaddis-e-Aázam e Hind*, author of a tafsīr; father of Shaykh Sayyid Madanī Miyān.

²⁷ *Ziyāuddīn* in Urdu; also famous by his title *Qutub e Madinah*.

14. Mawlānā Laāl Muḥammad Khān Madrasī (d. 1339/1921)
15. Mawlānā Muḥammad Raḥīm Bakhsh Ārwī (d. 1343/1925)
16. Mawlānā Ḥasanayn Ridā Khān²⁸ (d. 1402/1981)
17. Mawlānā Ābd al-Bāqī Burhān al-Ḥaq Jabalpūrī (d. 1405/1985)
18. Qādī Ābd al-Waḥīd Azīmābādī (d. 1326/1908)
19. Mawlānā Muftī Taqaddus Ālī Khān (d. 1408/1988)
20. Shaykh Sayyid Sulaymān Ashraf Bihārī (d.1358/1939)

The following prominent Arab scholars have received ijazahs in ḥadīth and other sciences from Alahazrat:

1. Mawlānā Sayyid Ābd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī²⁹ (d. 1332/1913)
2. Shaykh Ṣālīḥ Kamāl al-Makkī³⁰ (d. 1325/1913)
3. Shaykh Sayyid Ismāʿīl ibn Sayyid Khalīl³¹ (d. 1338/1919)
4. Shaykh Sayyid Muṣṭafā ibn Sayyid Khalīl (d. 1339/1920)
5. Shaykh Aḥmad Ibn Abī'l Khayr Mīrdād
6. Shaykh Muḥammad ibn al-Marzūqī Abū Ḥusayn
7. Shaykh Ḥasan al-ʿUjaymī
8. Shaykh As'ād al-Dahhān al-Makki
9. Shaykh Ābd al-Qādir al-Kurdī
10. Shaykh Muḥammad Saʿyīd al-Maghribī
11. Shaykh Sayyid Sālīm ibn Āydarūs
12. Shaykh Sayyid Abū Bakr ibn Sālīm

²⁸ He is the nephew of Alahazrat and son of Mawlānā Ḥasan Ridā Khān.

²⁹ Famous ḥadīth scholar of Morocco and author of many published works.

³⁰ Mufti and the Qādī of Ḥanafīs in Makkah.

³¹ Custodian of the Library of the Grand Mosque in Makkah.

Alahazrat has mentioned some more úlamā in *Ijāzāt al-Matīnah li Úlamāyi Bakkati wa'l Madīnah*. He also listed the names of his prominent disciples in a lengthy poem *Istimdād álā Ayyāl al-Irtidād*.³²

It is well-known that he became a mufti in his fourteenth year and that his father gave him the permission to issue fatwā. But this was not merely the confidence of a father in his son's abilities, but a fact also acknowledged by other scholars. Mawlānā Irshād Ĥusayn Rāmpūrī had issued a fatwā once and many senior scholars attested it. This was also brought to Alahazrat's father Mawlānā Naqī Khān who sent the bearer to have it attested by the mufti inside the room. The man went in and saw a fourteen year old in the room and came back saying: "There is only a boy sitting there." Mawlānā Naqī said, "Yes, he is the mufti; get his attestation." Alahazrat read the fatwā, did not agree with it and issued a contrary ruling, which was countersigned by his father. Other scholars, however, attested only Mawlānā Irshād's fatwā. When this fatwā reached the ruler of Rampur,³³ he invited the Mawlānā Irshād and gave him Alahazrat's fatwā; the noble and upright Mawlānā read the fatwā and said that indeed Alahazrat was right and his own opinion was incorrect. When the Nawab asked him why everybody else had attested his fatwā, the Mawlānā said that they had done so based on his own reputation.

Habits and Characteristic Attitudes

Alahazrat was pious, virtuous and mindful of the sunnah right from his childhood. He spent his entire life studying, researching, writing and teaching Islām. He was exceedingly cautious and scrupulous in his affairs and strived to follow the sunnah in every word and deed. He was the epitome of simplicity and humility. His manner was modest and unaffected; many people who came from afar would be astonished and could not believe that the plain looking man in front of them was the famous Imām Aĥmad Ridā Khān. Once, a man from Kathiawad came to Bareilly and went to the Masjid; he found Alahazrat doing wuḍū with water in an earthen jug. He greeted Alahazrat and said: 'I have come to visit Aĥmad Ridā Khān. Where can I meet him?'

³² The name of Mawlānā Maĥmūd Khān Jamjodhpūrī was accidentally left out.

³³ Nawab Kalb Ālī Khān (1834-1887) was a literate, scholarly and sunni ruler of Rampur who was a patron of sunni scholars.

Alahazrat said: ‘I am Aḥmad Riḍā.’ The man said, ‘I don’t mean you; I have come to meet Alahazrat Imām Aḥmad Riḍā Khān.’ This was because he did not wear imposing or expensive clothes, nor had a distinguishing attire even though his ancestors were aristocrats and he had inherited a handsome fortune. A simple *jubbah*,³⁴ loose and straight trousers, and an ordinary cap. He changed his clothes only on Fridays and Tuesdays, except for Eid or on the Prophet’s ﷺ birthday, for which he would change regardless of the weekday. He would never roar with laughter,³⁵ and if he had to yawn, he would slip his finger between his teeth to avoid making a noise. He walked with a light gait, true to the manner of believers praised in the Qur’ān:

The slaves of Raḥmān tread softly on earth.³⁶

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى
الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا

He was of medium height; and he was very frail and thin. He would usually squat on the ground with one thigh drawn up, unless when he had to read or write, when he would squat with both knees drawn up. He did not spit or stretch his feet towards the *Qiblah*; he always wore the turban³⁷ for obligatory prayers which, he always prayed in the congregation in the Masjid. He would always keep his eyes lowered in accordance with the sunnah. He ate very little and his food was also ordinary; he did not waste time and was always busy in writing or reading. He stayed indoors most of the time and came out only for obligatory prayers or to receive guests. However, he would sit in the courtyard after Āṣr prayer until Maghrib – and this was also the time for common audience. He was obedient and respectful towards his parents and elders. After his father passed away and the inheritance was distributed, Alahazrat handed his entire share to his mother and allowed her to dispense it as she pleased. Only when he wanted to buy books, he would request her for a grant and purchase books only with her approval.

³⁴ *Jubbah*: a loose shirt of thigh length or more, with full sleeves commonly worn by Muslim men in the subcontinent.

³⁵ As it is against the sunnah to guffaw.

³⁶ Sūrah Furqān, 25:63.

³⁷ *īmāmah*

His Humility

He would rarely make speeches and when he did, it was usually when he was forced by others. He would begin by saying: “I am a person who is incapable of preaching to my own self – how can I give counsel to others? However, if any of you wishes to inquire of a shara’yī ruling, I will be able to reply if I know the answer; because it is obligatory to answer questions related to shari’ah when one knows the answer.” Sometimes, he would just read from the books of elders when asked to make a speech, in spite of being such a massive scholar with an impressive memory. He once made a speech in Badāyūn explaining the *Sūrah Ḍuḥā* and spoke continuously for six hours without a break.

Alahazrat would not ask for food or drink; but had the habit of chewing betel.³⁸ Once when he was in retreat during Ramaḍān, a boy delayed bringing betel after iḥṭār. He was slightly annoyed and he cuffed the lad saying: “Why so late?” Thereafter, he called the boy and said: “I was wrong when I cuffed you earlier; it was not your fault. So please forgive me and slap me on my head.” The boy was terrified, as were Alahazrat’s attendants. The boy was shivering and he repeatedly said: “Sir, I have forgiven you.” Alahazrat said: “You are still a minor and you do not have the authority to forgive.” Eventually, Alahazrat held the boy’s hand and slapped upon his own head a number of times, and gave the boy a handful of coins before sending him away. His love and hate was only for the sake of Allāh. He neither hankered after praise, nor was he hurt by criticism. Indeed, he was exactly as he has described himself:

na marā nawish zeh taḥsīn; na marā nashīn zeh ṭa’an
na marā gosh ba mad’ḥay; na marā hosh zamay
manam o kunj khumūli ke naganjad dar way
juz man o chand kitābay o dawāt o qalamay

I flatter none, nor others deride -
No praise I heed; no curse, no chide.
The lonely nook has where I dwell,
Few books, an inkpot; and a quill.

³⁸ Betel: *pān*; This used to be a common habit in India, and is not an intoxicant. This should not be confused with *qāt* leaf chewed in Yemen, similar to Marijuana, which is an intoxicant.

Alahazrat would receive substantial mail from all over the country. Apart from letters from admirers, he would regularly receive letters filled with profanities. Once an admirer read an abusive letter and wanted to take legal action against the sender; Alahazrat brought out a bunch of letters that praised him, and asked the man to first reward the people who had praised him and then punish those who abused him, and said to him:

Every man is obligated to his deeds³⁹

كُلُّ أَمْرِي بِمَا كَسَبَ رَهِيْنٌ

Once a poor young man invited Alahazrat for breakfast. Alahazrat agreed and when they went in search of his place, it was in one of the poorer neighbourhoods. The young man was half-expecting that he may not come, and upon seeing the great man walking towards his door, he rejoiced and ran inside: "The Mawlānā is here!" Alahazrat's companion whispered in his ear that the house belonged to a drummer.⁴⁰ Alahazrat was mortified by this and after a while, he asked the young man: "Where is your father? And what does he do?" His mother answered from inside: "Mawlānā, my husband is now dead. He used to be a drummer once upon a time, but he repented in his later life. We have only this boy who is a construction worker." Alahazrat praised Allāh tāāla in relief, and ate the coarse millet bread and white lentil⁴¹ without hesitation⁴² and prayed for *barakah*.

On another occasion, the host presented beef and Alahazrat was allergic to beef. His companion suggested that perhaps the host must be informed to bring something else, but Alahazrat refused saying: "It is not my habit to do so," and ate from whatever was on the spread. Later, his gums became swollen and he could not even talk; he had to subsist only on milk.

Generosity, Kindness and Contentment

He would give away his clothes or things without hesitation and particularly when the poor or needy asked him. Friends and relatives would gift expensive clothes and Alahazrat would give them away the same day or within days. In winter, it was his practice to have a number of

³⁹ Sūrah Ṭūr, 52:21.

⁴⁰ *naqqārah*, *naubat*: kettledrum

⁴¹ Which was the kind of food very poor people ate and difficult to eat.

⁴² Even though he had a delicate disposition, and would eat biscuits for breakfast.

quilts made and distributed to the poor. Once his younger brother had an expensive quilt made for him and a poor man came asking for a quilt. All the quilts made for distribution that year were given away; yet, Alahazrat did not deny the man and gave him the expensive quilt gifted by his brother. Once he asked Mawlānā ʿĀfaruddīn to go for a debate in Mewāt, to end the harassment of Wahābīs, and presented a woollen *jubbah* that was brought from the blessed city of Madīnah.

This magnanimity was not limited to disciples and friends. Alahazrat would never turn a beggar away; allowances were fixed for widows and destitutes; he would even wire money for people requesting help from far off places. Once a man came seeking help and Alahazrat said: “I have less than a quarter⁴³ left with me now, and I have saved it to mail a few pending letters; if you so wish I will give it to you. This very morning, I had received 250 rupees but all of it was distributed;⁴⁴ from which you could get if you had come a little sooner.” The poor man was in dire need and he lowered his eyes in dejection; Alahazrat immediately handed him the quarter. Alahazrat would give away everything and hardly saved anything. In spite of being affluent and belonging to the gentry, he was never left with an amount upon which Zakāt would become obligatory; therefore, he once said: “I have never paid a single paisa in Zakāt all my life.” He would not ask anyone for anything, and if he wanted something, he would remain silent and beseech Allāh tāālā to fulfil his needs.

He had an unflinching faith in the sunnah and trusted ḥadīth reports more than other sources. Once his gums were swollen so much that he could not even talk. The doctor who examined him was convinced that it was plague – but Alahazrat was certain that the doctor was mistaken. In the ḥadīth, a duāā is mentioned which, if one recites upon seeing a person in affliction, the reciter will never suffer the same malady. Alahazrat had recited earlier when he had seen a victim of plague – and thus he was certain that it was not plague and that he would be cured. Just as he hoped, he recovered the following week.

⁴³ 3½ anna. Four anna is a quarter and 16 anna=1 rupee. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paisa>

⁴⁴ The price of gold in 1925 was 19 rupees for 10 grams. Thus INR 250 could buy 131g of gold. In December 2012, 131g of gold costs about INR 385,000 (\$6900). Mawlānā ʿĀfar says that the 250 rupees were mentioned as clarification to those in gathering, who were present when the money had come early in the day.

Piety and Adherence to the Shari'ah

Alahazrat was very pious and strict in adherence to shari'ah and brooked no laxity in any matter. In word or deed, he abstained from anything that contradicted the shari'ah, or anything opposed to the sunnah. He always held things in his right hand and started with the right side. He would even write numbers from the right.⁴⁵ He always donned his clothes and shoes as prescribed in the sunnah and observed this unfailingly. Once he went to visit a shaykh and saw him giving *bay'ah*⁴⁶ to women without segregation or women wearing veils. Alahazrat came back without meeting him. The shaykh was an upright man; so he came to Alahazrat and promised to do bay'ah appropriately in the future, and mindful of the shari'ah. Alahazrat shook his hand and embraced him. Alahazrat performed obligatory prayers always in the masjid and in the congregation regardless of the weather. He was very cautious in his prayer and if he had the slightest doubt, he would repeat his prayer. Once a mawlid reciter said that the angels will first return the soul in the blessed body of RasūlAllāh ﷺ on Judgement day. Alahazrat was visibly angry and forced the reciter to stop his recitation because this is against the well-known ḥadīth and belief of Ahl as-Sunnah that Prophets are alive in their blessed tombs.

By Allāh you are alive, and you live –
Only veiled from the eyes of the world

He avoided meeting princes and royalty. Once Shāh Mahdī Ḥasan sent a message to Alahazrat trying to obtain his commitment after inviting the Nawab of Rampur⁴⁷ who was eager to meet Alahazrat – Alahazrat refused to go. On another occasion, during a stopover at Bareilly, the Nawāb sent his chamberlain with a gift of 1500 rupees, requesting an audience; Alahazrat, standing in his doorway without inviting the chamberlain inside said: “Please take this [money] back with you and tell them that my poor abode is not worthy of receiving royal guests, and nor am I acquainted

⁴⁵ Numbers are read – and therefore usually written – from the left even though the Arabic script itself is written from right to left.

⁴⁶ Swearing allegiance to be obedient and observant of the shari'ah and follow the sunnah; it is proven from sunnah and a predominantly sufi practice by which the person giving bay'ah becomes the shaykh or master, and the one receiving it becomes the murid or disciple.

⁴⁷ Nawab Ḥāmid Ālī Khān.

with the manners of the court, that I can come myself.” Once a group of tafdīlīs conspired to corner Alahazrat when he was ill and had taken laxatives, and was unable to go out; they challenged him for a debate and Alahazrat promptly accepted. The paramedic urged him not to accept as it was not safe to go in this condition; Alahazrat refused to stay back and said: “I would rather die debating than refusing to debate.” He listed thirty questions for his opponents challenging them to answer, which remained unanswered. Details of this debate and the ensuing silence was published as a monograph *Fat’h e Khaybar*. During the Khilāfat Movement, many Muslims were attracted to Mohandas Gandhi and a major Sunni scholar had also approved of his proposal. Encouraged by his joining the movement, a person came to Alahazrat with a message from Gandhi that he wished to come to Bareilly to meet and discuss with him. Alahazrat replied: “What will Gandhi discuss with me? Religious matters or worldly issues? What do I have to do with worldly matters? I have cast off mundane issues even related to myself”.⁴⁸

His Respect for Scholars and Sayyids

Alahazrat had immense respect for scholars and sayyids.⁴⁹ Indeed, one of the indicators of sincere love of the Prophet ﷺ is to love and respect his heirs – righteous scholars and his progeny. Once a sayyid who had fallen into penury came to his door and said: “Can somebody help a sayyid?” Alahazrat had received money for his monthly expenses that very day and he took the till, full of notes and coins, and presented it to the sayyid. The sayyid looked at the box and picked up a single quarter; Alahazrat said: “Master, you can take as much as you wish.” The sayyid said: “This is enough.” Servants were then instructed that henceforth, the sayyid should receive a grant prior to his asking.

Once a young boy was employed as a page in the household. Alahazrat came to know that he was a sayyid and instructed his folks to never order the boy nor ask him to do any service; and to give him anything he asked. However, the agreed salary would be given promptly at the beginning of the month. Once a sayyid scholar who was also the descendant of

⁴⁸ Dr. Mukhtāruddīn Ahmad Ārzo, Former Dean, Faculty of Arts, Aligarh Muslim University. *Anwar e Razā*, p366.

⁴⁹ Sayyid: Descendant of RasūlAllāh ﷺ.

Alahazrat's own shaykh came to Bareilly. He was wearing gold rings. Alahazrat served him and poured water to wash his hands and told the sayyid: "I request you to give me your ring and chain." The sayyid readily gave it to Alahazrat and proceeded to Bombay. Later, the sayyid received a message from his daughter that Alahazrat had sent a parcel to their home with a note, that the ring and chain were a gift to the daughter. Alahazrat corrected the scholar and the sayyid in such a beautiful manner.

He was harsh on heretics and Wahābīs; but kind and compassionate toward Sunni Muslims. According to his fatwā it is forbidden to accord respect to a *fasiq*⁵⁰ – except when he is a sayyid; and a sayyid shall be respected as long as he remains in Ahl as-Sunnah.

The Nawab of Rampur invited⁵¹ Alahazrat and was very impressed after meeting the young man. He advised him to study logic and philosophy from Ābd al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī.⁵² Incidentally, Shaykh Khayrābādī arrived at the scene. After introductions, he asked the young Alahazrat: "How far have you studied logic?" Alahazrat replied: "*Qāzī Mubarak*." Khayrābādī asked sneeringly: "Have you read *Tahdhīb*?" Alahazrat shot back: "So you teach *Tahdhīb* after *Qāzī Mubarak*?"⁵³ Khayrābādī said: "What do you do in Bareilly?" Alahazrat replied: "I teach, write fatāwā and refute Wahabis." Khayrābādī said: "Oh! We have a lunatic⁵⁴ here too, who is always raving about refuting Wahābīs." Alahazrat replied: "Your father was the first person [in India] to refute Wahābīs." Khayrābādī was piqued and said: "If you keep countering every statement of mine, I cannot teach you." Alahazrat replied: "I have already decided not to study with a person who does not respect Sunni scholars".

⁵⁰ A disobedient or openly sinning person such as a drunkard, or a person who omits obligatory prayers or shaves the beard.

⁵¹ Alahazrat was very young and he was invited by his father in law, who took him to the Nawab who was a patron of sunni scholars. This was Nawāb Kalb Āli Khān. [1834-1887 CE].

⁵² He was the son of the famous Imām Fadl al-Ĥaqq Khayrābādī, who was exiled to Andaman Islands – *kālā pānī* – for his prominent role in the First War of Indian Independence and was hanged thereafter accused of sedition.

⁵³ *Tahdhīb* is a beginner's guide and *Qazi Mubarak* is a fairly advanced book. It is a lengthy conversation where Alahazrat answers him instantly, until finally, the latter was piqued.

⁵⁴ Khayrābādī is referring to Shaykh Ābd al-Qādir Badāyūnī.

Erudition and Memory

He had a phenomenal memory – and no wonder he could pile up proofs upon proofs for his arguments. Sometimes a single fatāwā of 50 pages contains references from so many sources, even half of which cannot be found in multi-volume works written by contemporaries.

People would unknowingly address him as *hāfiz*,⁵⁵ Alahazrat was disturbed by this as he was hitherto not a *hāfiz*. One Ramadān he began memorising the Qur’ān and recite one part every day; by the end of the month, he had memorised the entire Qur’ān.

Once he handed twenty-nine letters to Mawlānā Amjad Ālī and three others to read aloud; Alahazrat would dictate the answer and they would write down the answers. The first would read the letter and Alahazrat would dictate a few lines and by the time the first scribe was writing, the second would read the letter and Alahazrat would dictate the answer to the second letter; then the third, the fourth and as they were all busy, he continued with the first where he left off and by that time, the second was ready to take dictation. Mawlānā Zafaruddīn who was sitting there watching all this says that he was literally sweating at this relay and in the meantime another person asked a question – and Alahazrat answered him as well; replies to all the 29 letters were completed in this fashion. On another occasion, Shaykh Muḥammad Kichauchawī who handled fatāwā related to inheritance, had to calculate the shares of fifteen branches (and their descendants) of the family tree. He took a day to compile his answer and came to Alahazrat for verification. The question was read out to Alahazrat that fifteen members of a line had all died leaving behind a number of descendants, who were all named. No sooner had Shaykh Muḥammad finished reading the question and names, Alahazrat began to pronounce the shares: A gets so much, B gets so much and so forth.

Once, he borrowed a copy of *Úqūd al-Durriyyah fi’l Fatāwā al-Ĥamidiyyah* of Ibn Ābidīn from the muḥaddith Mawlānā Waṣiy Aḥmad Suratī. He read both volumes all through the night and until noon the next day and returned it. When Mawlānā Suratī asked him amazed: “Is one reading enough?” Alahazrat replied: “At least for the next two or three months, I

⁵⁵ In the past it would mean one who had memorised ḥadīth with chains of narrations; but in our times, it is commonly used to refer to a person who has memorised the entire Qur’ān.

will be able to cite the text [from anywhere in the book] in my fatāwā – and as far as the information therein is concerned, InShā’Allāh, I will remember for the rest of my life.” The book *Al-Dawlatu’l Makkiyyah* was written largely out of memory.

First Ĥajj

He went on his first Ĥajj with his parents in the year 1295. During this visit to the ĥaramayn he received ijāzahs from Shaykh Sayyid Aĥmad Daĥlān and Shaykh Ābd al-Raĥmān Sirāj. The Shāfi’ī imām, Shaykh Ĥusayn ibn Šālīĥ Jamal al-Layl took him home without any prior introduction and gave him authorisations in the six books of ĥadīth, the Qādirī path and wrote them with his own hand and said: “You are Aĥmad, the Light of Religion.”⁵⁶ The shaykh also kissed the forehead of a young Alahazrat and said: “I see the light of Allāh’s guidance in this forehead.” Thereafter he commanded Alahazrat to translate his Ĥajj guide into Urdu, which Alahazrat did and annotated, mentioning Ĥanafī positions. This short epistle is named *Nayyarah al-Waḍiyyah fī Sharĥi Jawharah al-Muḍiyyah*. This particular authorisation has only eleven links to Imām Bukhārī.

Second Ĥajj

This was undertaken in unexpected circumstances but turned out to be a historical event. Alahazrat had initially not planned for Ĥajj in 1323; he went until Jhansi to bid farewell to his family departing for Ĥajj, when one of his own couplets suddenly came to mind:

***wāa e maĥrūmi e qismat ke maiñ phir ab ke baras
rah gayā hamrah e zuwwār e maḍīnah ho kar***

Alas! My fate, my misfortune! This year as well –
With visitors to Maḍīnah I stayed, only until farewell

Upon which he penned one of his most memorable poems:

***phir uthā walwalah e yād e mughīlān e ārab
phir khinchā dāman e dil sū-e bayābān e ārab***

Yearning for the thorns of Arabia gushes rises again,
The heart is yanked toward the forests of Arabia again

⁵⁶ Ḍiyā’uddīn Aĥmad.

Immediately, he made an intention to visit the Messenger ﷺ. He went home, took permission of his mother and embarked on the journey straight away. It was in this visit that he wrote his memorable *Dawlah*, presented his fatwā on heretics which was attested by prominent scholars, and was hailed by the scholars of ĥaramayn as the Reviver of the 14th century. It was also during this visit that he was blessed with the vision of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and he saw him ﷺ with waking eyes.

Reviver of the Century – The Mujaddid

In a ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth, narrated by Sayyidunā Abū Hurayrah ؓ RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said:

Verily, Allāh tāālā will send my ummah [a scholar] at the head of every century who shall revive the religion for them.

This ĥadīth is narrated by *Abū Dāwūd*, Ĥākīm in his *Mustadrak*, Bayhaqī in *Mārifah*, Ṭabarānī in *Mújam al-Awsaṭ*, Abū Nuáym in *Ĥilyah*. Suyūṭī in his marginalia of *Abū Dāwūd* says that it is a ṣaĥīĥ ĥadīth. Among the conditions of a mujaddid is that he will be born in the previous century and pass away in the following, and shall be well-known at the head of the century in which he passes away. It is necessary that the Reviver be a master of Islamic sciences and that contemporary scholars acknowledge his mastery and that the common people benefit from his knowledge. It is not necessary that a century should have only one mujaddid – there can be many mujaddids in the same century. Thousands of scholars and muftis would write to Alahazrat seeking solutions for problems that they could not find in books and on issues without precedent. Indeed, if it were not for Alahazrat, the subcontinent would have become entirely Wahābī or Deobandi.⁵⁷ Deobandis and other heretics changed their books or hide them from Muslims after publishing blasphemies, primarily because of Alahazrat. Today, it is the followers of Imām Aĥmad Riḍā – pejoratively called as Baraylawis – who are adherent to the Sunni creed and unequivocally refute Wahabis. Alahazrat's books remain as formidable as ever – in the aid and support of Ahl as-Sunnah.

⁵⁷ And its offshoot – the Tablighi Jamaat. Deobandis are Wahabis with a difference: they accept and adhere to madh'habs. Deobandis claim to be Māturīdī-ĥanafī, but they are actually Neo-Mūtazilī/Wahābī – ĥanafī; Deobandi elders believe that it is not impossible for Allāh tāālā to lie; that it is bidāĥ to believe that Allāh does not have a direction. Sub'ĥanAllāh.

His Love of the Prophet ﷺ

There could not be a better description, nor a more fitting title; undisputed by friend or foe, admirer or critic. It is that praise which the apex of humility would eagerly come down to embrace and proudly sport on its sleeve as a medal of honour: The love of the Prophet ﷺ. Everything Alahazrat did or said was governed by the love of the Nabiy ﷺ. He was drowned in this sublime love and to this day he is identified by it and InShā'Allāh, he will be raised on Judgement day with his beloved ﷺ – because on that day, one shall be with those whom he loves.

In a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth, it is reported that RasūlAllāh ﷺ has said:

None amongst you has truly believed until I have become more beloved to you than your children, your parents and the whole of mankind.⁵⁸

In a letter granting authorisation to a scholar, Alahazrat wrote:

Among sciences and knowledge – by which, and for which I live – I have been blessed with the love of these three:

- First of all and the best of all, the most superior and the most precious: the defence of my Master, the Chief of Messengers ﷺ. Defending his ﷺ honour from the unbridled tongue of every mean and contemptible Wahābī who insolently says disrespectful things about him ﷺ. This alone is sufficient for me – if my Lord Almighty accepts, and this is my expectation from my Lord; and He has said: “I shall be, just as my slave expects Me to be”.
- Secondly: refuting rest of the heretics, who claim that they belong to the religion and are religious – but nay, they are not; they are corrupt and nefarious.
- Thirdly: issuing fatāwā to the best of my ability according to the well-grounded and abundantly clear Ḥanafī madh'hab.⁵⁹

His poetry and his prose is brimming with the love of the Messenger ﷺ which only the jealous or the inimical will refuse to acknowledge. Such rich expressions are a product of sincere love, and indeed, such sublime verse cannot be written without a genuine feeling.

⁵⁸ *Bukhārī, Muslim, Nasāyī.*

⁵⁹ *Ijāzātu'l Matīnah, Alahazrat.*

When his enemies attacked him and slandered his forefathers he wrote:

I am happy that as long as they are busy abusing me, slandering and reviling me, they are prevented from speaking ill of my master Muḥammad ﷺ or diminishing his rank. I have published this before and I write again: the coolness of my eyes is in the blessing that my honour and the honour of my forefathers be sacrificed for the sake of Muṣṭafā's honour and be a shield for his honour. O Allāh let it be thus indeed.⁶⁰

He did not hesitate to forsake and refute anyone who disrespected RasūlAllāh ﷺ regardless of the person's standing. He had imbibed the spirit of love as described in Sūrah Mujādilah; aptly, he calculated the year of his birth from a part of that verse:

Allāh has inscribed faith upon the
hearts of such people and aided
them with a Spirit⁶¹

أُولَئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ
الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِّنْهُ

Shaykh Khalid Thabit was misled by Deobandis and he believed that Alahazrat's followers were similar to Bahā'is and Qadiyanis and out of Islam. He was then introduced to Alahazrat and his books, which led him to reconsider his previous position. He has since written a book introducing Alahazrat in Arabic, and he writes in its preface:

This I have learned - and observed - the love of the Prophet ﷺ is an exalted station that Allāh tāālā does not bestow upon a heretic, an innovator, a hypocrite or a charlatan. When a man is elevated to this rank, then you trust him and his religion and take from him with full confidence, because the immaculate Prophet ﷺ has said: *'a man shall be with whom he loves.'* Every innovator has a shortcoming: absence or paucity in his love for the Prophet ﷺ.⁶²

His love for Muṣṭafā ﷺ was immense and everyone in his sphere of influence were imbued with it; and continues to this day. Even common folk, irrespective of their level of knowledge, have become aware and cognisant of the Muslim ethos – the love and respect of our master Muḥammad ﷺ.

⁶⁰ *Ab'hās e Akhīrah*, Alahazrat.

⁶¹ Sūrah Mujādilah, 58:22.

⁶² *Inṣāf al-Imām*, Shaykh Muḥammad Khālid Thābit al-Miṣrī.

Creativity

Alahazrat was very creative and had a distinct style in everything he did and invented methods or improved upon those that already existed. The following are prominent examples of his creativity:

Numeric skill: *Abjad* is a numeral system in which each letter of the alphabet is assigned a value. It is an ancient practice to form chronograms for any prominent event – like years of birth or death; or birth-names, etc. Authors would strive to find names for their books that would also be chronograms. Alahazrat was a wizard in chronograms – the names of many of his books are chronograms and his proficiency was such that he would compute ad hoc chronograms of Qur’ānic verses. For example *Tamhīd e Īmān*, written in 1326 tallies thus:

تمهید ایمان بآیات قرآن (1326)										
ت	م	ه	ی	د	ا	ی	م	ا	ن	
400	40	5	10	4	1	10	40	1	50	561
ب	ا	ی	ا	ت	ق	ر	ا	ن		
2	1	10	1	400	100	200	1	50		765

He calculated the year of his passing from the following verse of the Qur’ān:

And vessels of silver and goblets
will be passed around in their
midst⁶³

وَيُطَافُ عَلَيْهِمْ بِآنِيَةٍ مِّنْ
فِضَّةٍ وَأَكْوَابٍ

This part of the verse adds up to 1340; Alahazrat had written this on a piece of paper which was found under his pillow after his passing. He had also noted if the *wāw* was dropped, the sum would be 1334, the year Mawlānā Waṣṣiy Aḥmad Sūrātī passed away.

⁶³ Sūrah Al-Insān, 76:15.

The Preface of Fatāwā: The preface of *Fatāwā ar-Ridāwiyyah* being the praise of Allāh tāālā and salutation to the Prophet is composed using names of fiqh imams and books. A few lines from the two page preface are presented below:

al-ĥamdulillāh * huwa'l fiqh al-akbar * wa'l jāmiy al-kabir * li ziyādāti fayḍihī'l
mabsūt * ad-durari al-ghurar * bihi'l hidāyah * wa minhu'l bidāyah * wa ilayhi'n
nihāyah * bi ĥamdihi'l wiqāyah * wa nuqāyati'd dirāyah * wa āynu'l ināyah * wa
ĥusnu'l kifāyah * wa'ṣ ṣalātu wa's salāmu āla al-imām al-aāzam li'r rusuli'l kirām *
malikī * wa shāfiyī * aĥmadi'l kirām * yaqūlu'l ĥusnu bilā tawaqquf * muĥammadin'il
ĥasanu abū yūsuf.

We praise Allāh and it is the greatest knowledge and an immense aggregation of His abundant favours and spread out bounties, lustrous precious pearls. Guidance is only from Allāh; and [His praise] is in every beginning and there it ends, and in His praise is safety, and because of it, the mind stays pure, which in itself is an enormous bounty and a sufficient means. Salawat and Salam on the greatest leader of all the Messengers: my master, my intercessor, the most praiseworthy among the honourable and the noble ones. Beauty exclaims without deliberation: Muĥammad the handsome, in his beauty is the father of Yusuf.

Fiqh al-Akbar, Jāmiy al-Kabir, Ziyādāt, Fayḍ, Mabsūt, Duraru'l Ghurar, Hidāyah, Bidāyah, Nihāyah, Wiqāyah, Nuqāyah, Dirāyah, Ināyah, Kifāyah are all commonly referenced Ĥanafī fiqh works. Imām al-Aāzam, Mālikī, Shāfiyī, Aĥmad [ibn Ĥanbal,] Muĥammad [ibn al-Ĥasan al-Shaybānī,] Abū Yūsuf [Qāḍī Yāqūb] are all major imams and these names are used to describe the attributes of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Preface of Ĥadīth Terms: In another treatise, the opening praise of Allāh and salutation to the Prophet ﷺ is composed using ĥadīth terms, in which he has employed 80 terms of ĥadīth.

The Qādirī Chain: At the behest of Shaykh Mahdi Ĥasan, a scion of the Marahrah-Barakātī family, Alahazrat wrote a *salawat* using names of the mashayikh in the chain.

Most of his books begin with the praise and salawat which have phrases and words that capture the gist of the fatwā. His fatāwā in thousands of pages is often rhyming prose. He would answer the fatwā in the language and mode of the questioner: Arabic fatwā for Arabic questions and Persian for Persian; when a question was sent in

a verse, he wrote the fatwā in verse. The names of his books are homonyms, descriptors derived from the ḥadīth that would be used as proof in the fatwā. He interlaces Quranic phrases between running text for emphasis. For example in the conclusion of his book *Subḥān as-Subbūḥ*, in a moving appeal to forsake the ugly belief of *imkān al-kadhib*,⁶⁴ he says:

Whining is the old habit of those who are unable to answer; but, *innamā a'yizukum bi wāḥidah*⁶⁵ – reminding you of the right of Islām and hoping you will heed, I ask you to forget your biases and egos for a few moments; *mathnā wa furādā*,⁶⁶ sit in seclusion in ones and twos and think about it. If the speech of your opponent is true and upright, then why hesitate to accept it? Did the Qur'ān not teach you, did your Lord Almighty not tell you *sa yadh'dhakkaru man yakhshā; wa yatajannabuha'l ashqā*.⁶⁷ My dear brothers! O my companions in uttering the kalimah – the ego is deceitful⁶⁸ and waylays you; and the accursed devil is its helper. But by Allāh! *wa idhā qīla lahu'ttaqillāha akhadhat'hu'l izzatu bi'l ithm*⁶⁹ is a terrible calamity – *a laysa minkum rajulun rashīd*?⁷⁰

In an ode of quatrains, he has written each quatrain in four languages: Arabic, Persian, Hindi/Pūrabī and Urdu and each line flows and seamlessly integrates with that which follows.

lam ya'tī nazīruka fī nazārin
misl e tū na shud paydā jānā
jag rāj ko tāj torey sar sohey
tujh ko shāh e har do sarā jānā

⁶⁴ Deobandi elders believe that it is not impossible for Allāh tāālā to utter falsehood; in other words, it is hypothetically possible for Allāh tāālā to utter lies. *al-iyādhu billāh*.

⁶⁵ Sūrah Saba' 34:46. "Indeed, I advise you to do one thing..."

⁶⁶ Ibid. "in groups of two and alone."

⁶⁷ Sūrah Aālā 87:10-11, "He who fears, will heed admonition; and the vicious will stay away from it"

⁶⁸ Sūrah Yūsuf 12:53, *inna'n nafsā la ammāratun bi's sū'u*

⁶⁹ Sūrah Baqarah, 2:206, "When he is asked to fear Allāh, he becomes more obstinate"

⁷⁰ Sūrah Hūd, 11:78, "Is there not a single person amongst you who is rightly guided?" It must be noted that Rashid Gangohi was most prominent and the leader of those who claimed that "Lying is not impossible for Allāh tāālā."

His Knowledge

Alahazrat was proficient in fifty-five branches of knowledge which he has mentioned himself in his authorisation to Shaykh Ismā'īl Khalīl which was formalised in a written document⁷¹ on 8th Šafar 1324. While some of these sciences are grouped under one head in our time, these were specialisations in the previous century just as we have specialisations in our time. For example, engineering was one broad discipline not so long ago and which, in our times has been subdivided into scores of specialist disciplines.

Syntax, morphology, lexicology and semantics may appear unimportant to ordinary minds, but these branches are extensive, have a steep learning curve and are essential to progress beyond basic studies. Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī in his *Jāmi' al-Ūlūm*,⁷² Suyūṭī in *Nuqāyah/Itmāmu'd Dirāyah*, Nawāb Šiddīq Ḥasan Bhopālī⁷³ in *Abjad al-Ūlūm* have all considered and treated these as separate sciences. Indeed, many blunders made by scholars and pretenders is a direct result of a poor grasp of fundamental sciences, which causes them to misunderstand texts and base their arguments on false premises. True, some sciences in the list have hence become obsolete, but Alahazrat had mastered them in an age when they were current and deemed important.

1. Qur'ānic Sciences
2. Ḥadīth Sciences
3. Principles of Ḥadīth
4. Jurisprudence (Ḥanafī school)
5. Jurisprudence (other schools)
6. Principles of Fiqh

⁷¹ *Al-Ijāzātu'l Matīnah*, 64 and *Ḥāyat e Mawlānā*, 22 by Prof. Sayyid Masūūd.

⁷² *Ḥadāyiq al-Anwār fī Ḥaqāyiqi'l Asrār* in which Imām Rāzī discusses sixty branches of knowledge of his time; originally in Persian.

⁷³ He was the most erudite Anti-Madh'habi of his time and a prolific author; where other heretics had only followers, this one had power and privilege as well; he was the royal consort, married to the Sultana of Bhopal. [1248 –1307 / 1832 – 1889].

7. Polemics
8. Qur'ānic Exegesis, Commentary
9. Creed, Rational Theology
10. Syntax
11. Morphology
12. Semantics
13. Pragmatics
14. Rhetoric, Figures of Speech
15. Logic
16. Debate
17. Philosophy
18. Fractions
19. Astronomy
20. Numeracy
21. Geometry
22. Recitations, Readings of the Qur'ān
23. Phonology and Phonetics [for Qur'ān Pronunciation]
24. Taṣawwuf, Sufism
25. Ethics
26. Morality and Etiquette
27. Biographical Evaluation of Narrators
28. Biographies
29. Histories
30. Lexicology and Etymology
31. Literature and Associated Sciences
32. Arithmetic

33. Algebra
34. Sexagesimals
35. Logarithms
36. Chronometry, Calculation of Timings and Prayer Schedules
37. Science of Perspective and Optics
38. Spherical Geometry
39. Astrometry
40. Spherical Trigonometry
41. Plane Trigonometry
42. Modern Astronomy, Planetary Science, Cosmology
43. Quadratic Equations
44. Jafar
45. Zayircha⁷⁴
46. Arabic Verse [Prosody]
47. Arabic Composition
48. Persian Verse [Prosody]
49. Persian Composition
50. Urdu Verse [Prosody]
51. Urdu Composition

⁷⁴ “The Za’irajah: A branch of the science of letter magic, (practiced) among the (authorities on letter magic), is (the technique of) finding out answers from questions by means of connections existing between the letters of the expressions (used in the question). They imagine that these (connections) can form the basis for knowing the future happenings they want to know.” [Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, Trans. Franz Rosenthal, 3/182.] In all these examples, it is kufr to believe that information obtained from such sciences (or pseudosciences) is absolutely true and certain (qaṭʿī-yaqīnī) and one who has obtained this information has absolute knowledge of unseen (is also kufr); but if one practices the Zayirjah or **Jafar** – as a guide similar to *istikhārah* and not with the belief or claim of absolute knowledge of unseen, it is not kufr. Allāh tāālā knows best.

52. Calligraphy: Naskh
53. Calligraphy: Nastáliq
54. Recitation with Tajwīd
55. Inheritance⁷⁵

Alahazrat has merged subdisciplines and interdisciplinary subjects under a single major heading. For example, Qur'ānic sciences would be eighty⁷⁶ in number; and even if we group most minor topics, we will still be left with more than a dozen major branches that require a separate study; but in this list they are counted as one. After listing these sciences, Alahazrat writes:

I seek Allāh's refuge. I do not say this to boast about my abilities or in vanity or pride – [I mention this] only to thank the bounties of my Lord upon me. Nor do I claim to be an expert in all these sciences.⁷⁷

Notwithstanding his self-effacing comments, his expertise is evident from his works and acknowledged by people accomplished in their respective fields, unlike many of his contemporaries whose achievements are extolled by admirers, but cannot be corroborated by independent sources.

Languages: He wrote in Arabic, Persian and Urdu with equal and native ease. Dr. Rashid Ábdu'r Raḥmān al-Úbaydī⁷⁸ writes:

⁷⁵ 1)ú'lūm al-qur'ān 2)ú'lūm al-ḥadīth 3)uṣūl al-ḥadīth 4)fiqh al-ḥanafī 5)fiqh al-madhāhib 6)uṣūl al-fiqh 7)jadal 8)tafsīr 9)áqīdah – kalām 10)naḥw 11)ṣarf 12)māānī 13)bayān 14)badīy 15)manṭiq 16)munāẓarah 17)falsafah 18)taksīr 19)hay'ah 20)ḥisāb 21)handasah 22)qirā'ah 23)tajwīd 24)taṣawwuf 25)sulūk 26)akhlāq 27)asmā'a ar-rijāl 28)siyar 29)tawārikh 30)lughāh 31)adab bi funūnih 32)arithmaṭiqi 33)al-jabr wa'l muqabalah 34)al-ḥisāb al-sittīnī 35)loghāarithmāt 36)ilmu't tawqīt 37)al-manāẓir wa'l marāyā 38)ilmu'l ākar 39)zījāt 40)muthallath al-kurawī 41)muthallath al-musaṭṭah 42)hay'ah al-jadīdah 43)murabbāāt 44)jafar 45)zāyirjah inshā'a an-naẓm wa'n nathr fi'l 46-47) ārabiyyah 48-49)farsiyyah 50-51)hindiyyah 52)khaṭṭ naskh 53)khaṭṭ nastāliq 54)tilāwah 55)ilmu'l farāyid

⁷⁶ *Al-Itqān fī Úlūm'il Qur'ān*, Suyūṭī.

⁷⁷ Vide *Hayāt e Imām*, Prof. Sayyid Masūd.

⁷⁸ Dr. Rashid was born in 1940 in Aázamiyyah in Baghdād and graduated from Baghdad University in 1962. His specialisation is Arabic literature / linguistics and he has produced a number of critical editions of famous classics in addition to his own books on literary criticism. He has annotated the two Arabic odes named *Qaṣīdatān Raḥīyatān*.

...one cannot fail to notice his facility with Arabic vocabulary and the accuracy of his usage which can be corroborated by lexicons for both meaning and context.

...that which distinguishes the poetry of al-Baraylawī from that of others is his ability to interweave a lengthy poem such that stanzas are reinforced by one another and are interconnected.⁷⁹

It is necessary to highlight that these poems were written in 1300, when Alahazrat was merely 28 years old, and if such was his ability in his budding years, what can be said after he crossed fifty? Shaykh Aḥmad Abu'l Khayr Mirdād writes:

Praised be Allāh for the existence of such a shaykh. Verily, I have never seen a person like him in knowledge and eloquence.⁸⁰

Ḥadīth: Abu'l Ḥasan Nadawi wrote, that even though Alahazrat was well-versed in Ḥanafī fiqh, his knowledge of ḥadīth was poor. This is quite surprising because nobody among Alahazrat's contemporaries has mentioned or drawn from as many works of ḥadīth in their books or fatāwā as Alahazrat has done. Mawlānā Muḥammad Ḥanīf Khān Ridawī of Bareilly has compiled a ten-volume *Jāmiy al-Aḥādith*, a compendium of **3660** ḥadīth mentioned by Alahazrat in his fatāwā along with the context in which these ḥadīth were cited. Alahazrat was once asked about the books of ḥadīth in his reference and he answered:

Musnad Imām Aazam, Muwaṭṭā Imām Muḥammad, Kitāb al-Āthār, Kitāb al-Kharāj, Kitāb al-Ḥujaj, Sharḥ Māānī al-Āthār, Muwaṭṭā Imām Mālik, Musnad Imām Shāfiyī, Musnad Imām Aḥmad, Sunan Dārimī, Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Nasāyī, Ibn Mājah, Khaṣāyis by Nasāyī, Muntaqā Ibn al-Jarūd, Ílal al-Mutanāhiyah, Mishkāt, Jāmiy al-Kabīr, Jāmiy al-Ṣaghīr, Muntaqā Ibn Taymiyyah, Bulūgh al-Marām, Ámal al-Yawm wa'l Laylah, At-Tarḥīb wa't Tarḥīb, Khaṣāyis al-Kubrā, Al-Faraj baád al-Shiddah, Kitāb al-Asmā'a wa's Ṣifāt, etc. I read, teach and refer to more than fifty books of ḥadīth.⁸¹

⁷⁹ *Qaṣīdatān Rāyiyatān*, Preface by Dr.Rashid al-Úbaydī, Saddam University.

⁸⁰ Mawlānā Ismā'īl Khalīl's letter dated 12th Rajab 1324 from Makkah. Vide *Hayat e Imām*.

⁸¹ Alahazrat, *Iz'hāru'l Ḥaqq al-Jalīy*

Any student of ḥadīth knows that even if bibliographies and cross-references have existed for a long time,⁸² precise referencing is only a modern practice. One had to read books to find them, unlike facilities in our age such as search tools. Of course, *takhrīj* of earlier masters could be used, but Alahazrat's skill is beyond mere copying references; many ḥadīth he cites on a topic are not categorised under that specific topic in ḥadīth books. His proficiency is evident from the numerous ḥadīth he presents on a specific matter and in which there are no precedents. For example:⁸³

1. ***Amn wa'l Ūlā***: Thanawi and others considered *Salawāt al-Tāj* to be polytheistic because RasūlAllāh ﷺ is described in it as "Remover of Affliction." Alahazrat listed more than **200** ḥadīth which prove that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is indeed a remover of affliction and a comforter.
2. ***Tajallī al-Yaqīn***: in which he proved that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the Liegelord of all messengers – Alahazrat quoted **100** ḥadīth as his proof.
3. ***Rādd al-Qaḥaṭ***: in which it is explained that feeding poor and/or pious Muslims is a noble thing and if it is allowed to conduct such banquets to ward off adversities and pandemics; **60** ḥadīth.
4. ***Ḥayat al-Mawāt***: Wahābīs insist that the dead cannot hear and use this premise to negate tawassul and istighatha, even though such ḥadīth are present in the two ṣaḥīḥ collections.⁸⁴ Alahazrat cited **77** ḥadīth proving that the dead can indeed hear.
5. ***Jazā'a-Allāh Āduwwah***: Alahazrat mentioned **121** ḥadīth refuting the Qadiani false prophet.
6. ***Shamāyim al-Anbar***: Proving that the second adhān on Jumu'ah should be called outside the masjid, Alahazrat cited **45** ḥadīth.
7. ***Lumāh ad-Ḍufḥā***: explaining that it is necessary for Muslim males to keep beards and that it should not be shortened; **56** ḥadīth.

⁸² Such as books of *Aṭrāf* and mega-collections such as *Jamā al-Jawāmi'y* etc.

⁸³ Numbers are taken from *Jāmi'y al-Aḥādīth*, 1/411.

⁸⁴ See *Ahwāl al-Qubūr*, Ibn Rajab; *At-Tadhkirah*, Al-Qurṭubī; *Sharḥu's Ṣudūr*, Suyūṭī.

8. ***Al-Ĥuqūq*: 91** ḥadīth on the rights of parents.
9. ***Zubdah al-Zakiyyah***: prostration to anyone other than Allāh táālā is ḥarām if done with the intention of greeting and respect; and sheer idolatry if done with the intention of worship: **70** ḥadīth.
10. ***Ismāʾ al-Arbayīn***: A collection of **40** ḥadīth on the intercession of the Prophet ﷺ.

Calligraphy

Alahazrat would write in a neat hand in spite of his swift writing. He was proficient in Nastāliq and Naskh as he has mentioned himself and as can be seen from the samples below:

- An autobiographical quatrain penned and transcribed by himself
- *Ṣalawāt* he composed extempore with the names of shaykhs
- *Qaṣīdatān Rāyiyātān*: two odes in praise of Shaykh Faḍl al-Rasūl
- Draft of a treatise on trigonometry

قطعه
 نہ مرا نوش ز تحسین نہ مرا نیش ز طعن
 نہ مرا گوش میدہ نہ مرا ہوش ز غم
 منم و کنج خمی خالی کہ نگنجد درو
 جز من و پنہ کتابے و دوات و قلم

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
 الْمُصْطَفَى رَفِيعِ الْمَكَانِ ذَا الْمُرُوضِ
 عَلَى الشَّانِ بِوَالِدَيْ رُحْبَلٍ مِّنْ أُمَّتِهِ
 خَيْرٍ مِّنْ رِّجَالٍ مِّنَ السَّالِفِينَ وَحُسَيْنٍ
 مِّنْ زُرْعَتِهِ أَحْسَنٍ مِّنْ كَذَاوِكَ إِحْسَانٍ
 السَّابِقِينَ هُوَ السَّيِّدُ السَّجَادُ زَيْنُ الْعَالَمِينَ
 بِأَقْرَبِ عِلْمِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالْمُرْسَلِينَ هُوَ سَاقِي
 الْكَوْثَرِ مَالِكُ ثَنِيمٍ وَجَعْفَرُ الْكَذِي
 يَطْلُبُ فَوْسَهُ الْكَلِيمُ صَارِيهِ
 بِالصَّلَاةِ عَلَيْهِ هُوَ يَذْهَبُ ابْنُ مَيْمِ الْخَلِيلِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اللَّهُمَّ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ وَالصَّلَاةَ وَالسَّلَامَ عَلَى الْحَبِيبِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ
 قَصِيدَتَانِ مَشْتَمِلَتَانِ عَلَى ٣١٣ شَعْرًا لِعَدَدِ
 أَصْحَابِ بَدْرٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ فِي مَدْحِ
 تَاجِ الْفُجُولِ السِّيفِ الْمَسْلُوكِ عَلَى أَعْدَاءِ الرِّسُولِ صَلَوَاتُ
 تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَوْلَانَا الْمَوْلَى فَضْلِ الرَّسُولِ
 الْعِثْمَانِيِّ الْقَادِسِيِّ السَّعْيِيِّ الْبَدَائِيِيِّ بِرَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى
 عَلَيْهِ تَوَلَّى غَرْسَ أَشْجَارِهَا وَاجْتَنَاءَ ثَمَارِهَا وَفَتَقَ
 أَرْهَاقَهَا الْفَقِيرَ إِلَى رَبِّهِ الْمُقَرَّبِ بِهِ أَحْمَدُ رَضَا
 الْقَلَمُ الْبَرَكَاتِي الْبَرِيلِيُّ غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لَهُ ذَنْبَهُ كُلَّهُ دَقَّ وَجَلَّةً

القصيد الأولى

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 الحمد لله رب العالمين
 والصلاة والسلام على
 سيدنا محمد وآله

يَا مَعْزُومَ ذِكْرِ بَيْتِ الْكَانِ
 اللَّهُ يُصْحِكُكَ مِنْ أَجْكَانِي
 إِنَّ الْحَزِينَ لَسَائِلُ الْأَجْفَانِ

سَرَّكَ الْحَمَامُ عَلَى شَجَرَةِ الْبَنَانِ
 بَنِي دِمَاؤُكَ فِي أَجْعَاعِهَا
 بَكَيْتِ الْغُرُورَ وَفُجِيتِ مِنَ الْبُكَاءِ

Refutation of Anti-Islamic Movements and Heresies

Alahazrat refuted heretical sects unrelentingly and with full force, following in the footsteps of many great men like Imām Ghazālī and Imām Subkī. On a comparative reading of refutations by earlier scholars, one can notice a similar strength of conviction and fervour for religion, brandished like an unsheathed sword. Those with weak faith are intimidated by such uncompromising speech and misinterpret it as harshness. Indeed, one has to be harsh to enemies of religion and such harshness is a mark of faith. The only group of Muslims in the subcontinent that openly and unreservedly denounces Wahabīs and Rafidīs are followers of Imām Aḥmad Rida or those who respect him. We ask Deobandis – who claim to be Sunnis and pretend that they have nothing to do with Wahabism – to show us a single book or booklet written by any of their prominent scholars denouncing Wahabism;⁸⁵ or if they have published any such book written by Arab scholars.⁸⁶ True, they claim to oppose *Anti-Madh'habism*,⁸⁷ but it is also true that Ismā'īl Dihlawī, their grand imām, was the first to introduce Wahābī thought in India and derided adherence to madh'habs. Modern spinmeisters present him as a ḥanafī, and Deobandis choose to ignore the subject. Alahazrat refuted Wahabis/Anti-Madh'habites, Naturalists, Deobandis, Qadianis, Rafidis, false and misguided Sufis, Christian missionaries, Arya-Samajis and Philosophers.

False Accusations on Alahazrat

Deobandis and Anti-Madh'hab groups claim that Alahazrat was a *bidāṭī*, a man of innovation; that he supported innovative practices, that he was an unrelenting extremist, that he had a penchant to make takfir of anyone who did not agree with him.⁸⁸ Deobandis have another axe to grind, and

⁸⁵ A couple of words in a book by one of their scholars is no proof; is there a full fledged refutation of Wahabis anywhere? How can it exist when it was the kingpin of their ideology, Ismā'īl Dihlawī, who introduced this heresy in India.

⁸⁶ Even the mildly critical *Mafāhīm* of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ālawī was equivocally endorsed and thereafter effectively retracted by Taqī Ūthmānī.

⁸⁷ See works by Anwar Shāh Kashmīrī and Abū Ghuddah.

⁸⁸ *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir* has scholarly slanders; and dozens of books like *Shihāb al-Thāqib*, booklets of Chandpūrī, and *Al-Baraylawiyyah* of Ihsan Ilahi Zaheer are known for cheap and tawdry insults.

therefore allege that Alahazrat was inimical to their elders (like Gangohi, Nanotwi, Ambethwi and Thanawi) and therefore made takfir by attributing beliefs to them, which they did not profess. This propaganda has caused confusion and many Sunni scholars outside the subcontinent are deceived by such lies and some even think that Alahazrat and his followers are beyond the pale of Islām.⁸⁹ Scholars and students are working to change this grotesque picture and reveal the truth. It is therefore necessary to expose Wahabi-component of Deobandis, which they conceal in the company of Sunnis in the West and Arab countries.

False Accusation 1: He was a British Agent

This accusation keeps popping up every now and then, in spite of scholars having refuted this false accusation. Āllāmah Arshad al-Qadīr⁹⁰ sums this very well:⁹¹

Many times, I have challenged those who try to clean the dirt upon their faces by trying to wipe it with the mantle of Alahazrat, to show us proof for their claims; regardless whether such proofs are found in books of his admirers or those of his adversaries. Show us a single instance where Alahazrat was invited by any officer of the British government; or that any grant or pension was given by the British to Alahazrat; or that he was given economic assistance by the British at any time; or that Alahazrat had met any British officer anywhere; or that Alahazrat ever went to an Englishman's residence to meet him; or that any representative of the British government ever visited Alahazrat in his home. If this is not possible, then show us a single example where Alahazrat has praised the British in his writing, whether it is in his prose or his poetry. Contrast this with examples of Deobandi and Qadiyani leaders, which is mentioned in their own literature, which clearly shows who really had cordial relations with the British.

An incident⁹² is narrated by Maulavi Muḥammad Ḥusayn Meeruti, about the visit of Amīr Habibullah Khān, the governor of Afghanistan in 1905. Apparently, there was a disarray in the arrangements made for the army

⁸⁹ See Shaykh Khalid Thābit's *Inṣāf al-Imām*.

⁹⁰ Mawlānā Arshad al-Qādirī [1343-1422/1925-2002] was a famous debator, prolific author, prominent activist and educationist; his books include *Zalzalah*, *Lālah Zār* and *Zeyr o Zabār*.

⁹¹ Foreword to *Sawāniḥ Imām Aḥmad Ridā* by Shaykh Badruddīn Aḥmad. Dr. Masūūd has written a monograph titled *Gunāh e Bey-Gunāhi* [The Sin of not Sinning] examining and refuting this mendacious charge.

⁹² *Ḥayāt e Alahazrat*, 2/541.

accompanying the Amīr, as there was a change in the scope of work and contractors were not prepared to respond to additional requirements. The narrator was himself involved in this contract and he says that he approached Alahazrat in person to request him to pray for him and after he explained the situation, the following exchange took place:

Alahazrat: The army; is it the Amir's own army?

Maulavi Muḥammad Ḥusayn: No, it is the British army.

Alahazrat: If this was the Amir's own army, I would have prayed for you.

The rest of the story describes how things fell into place and the narrator escaped hardship and according to the narrator, due to the barakah of Alahazrat. But what is relevant here, is that Alahazrat refused to pray for his own disciple, because this was for the benefit of the British, albeit indirectly. Alahazrat would go to such lengths to keep his distance from the British; yet, Deobandis accuse him of being an agent without presenting a shred of evidence.

False Accusation 2: He was the Flag-Bearer of Takfīr

In a ḥadīth, RasūlAllāh ﷺ foretold of a time when the truthful will be slandered as liars, and liars praised as the truthful. The standard Deobandi narrative is what Abu'l Ḥasan Nadawī wrote that Alahazrat was hasty in takfīr and anybody who did not agree with him was declared a kāfir. Nadawī wrote: "he was the flag-bearer of takfīr." Does he say the same thing about Ismā'īl Dihlawī or his Deobandi elders? It was Ismā'īl who first introduced Wahābism in India and his *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* spared nobody⁹³ from kufr – commonly accepted practices like *tawassul* were slammed as polytheistic and Ismā'īl himself acknowledged that 'he had even labelled lesser practices as polytheism.'⁹⁴ Deobandi/Wahābī literature is chock full of rulings making takfīr on numerous things, yet Nadawī chose to describe Alahazrat as the flag-bearer of takfīr.

⁹³ He even claimed that the cool wind that blows in final times which shall cause the death of believers and when not a single Muslim remains on earth, had already happened – making himself a kāfir in the process.

⁹⁴ *Arwāḥ e Thalātha*, p74, Ismā'īl says about *Tafwiyatu'l Īmān*, an utterly burnable book which Deobandis adore and consider 'reading it and keeping it' as an integral part of faith. See *Fatāwā Rashīdiyyah*. It is so repugnant that even modern followers have tried to bowdlerise it and reword or omit passages.

We ask Deobandis to answer the following questions if they truly believe in Allāh tāālā and Judgement day:

1. How many people did Alahazrat rule kāfir?
2. What was the basis for this takfīr?
3. In which books or fatawā did he rule them kāfir? Was the reason for their takfīr mentioned therein or not? If yes, what was the reason?
4. He ruled: “anyone who disrespects or insults the Messenger ﷺ is a kāfir.” Is this incorrect?
5. He ruled: “all those who come to know about the blasphemies of an apostate and do not consider a blasphemer as a kāfir are also kafirs.” Is this incorrect?
6. He made takfīr of Deobandi elders: Gangohi, Nanotawi, Ambethvi, and Thanawi; was this out of personal grudge or was it because he believed that they had blasphemed (regardless of whether you accept it or not)?

Murtaza Ḥasan Chandpuri in spite of being a bitter enemy of Alahazrat acknowledged the truth, which modern Deobandis try to suppress:

The truth of the matter is: the difference between the takfīr made by Baraylwīs and the takfīr of Qadianis made by scholars of Islām is like the difference between the sky and the earth. Don't rake it up again. If, the scholars of Deoband were indeed like what Khān sahib⁹⁵ supposed them to be, then it would be obligatory for him to rule them kāfir. If he did not do so, he would have become a kāfir himself.⁹⁶

Alahazrat was extremely cautious about takfīr:

We prefer the opinion of Kalām scholars in these matters. And thus, do not do takfīr of a person as long as he does not deny or reject any necessary aspect of religion; or considers such a denier to be a Muslim.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Alahazrat Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān.

⁹⁶ *Ashadd al-Adhāb ālā Musaylamati'l Punjāb*, p13.

⁹⁷ *Izālatu'l Āār bi Ḥajri'l Karāyim án Kilābi'n Nār*, p10

False Accusation 3: He Promoted Innovative Practices

This is another broad accusation levelled against Alahazrat and the following things cited as examples:

1. He supported commemoration of death anniversaries of Awliyā'a which are known as *úrs* in India.
2. He supported celebration of Mawlid.
3. He supported standing up in reverence [*qiyām*] at the mention of the Prophet's ﷺ birth in Mawlid.
4. He supported *fatiḥah*, and other forms of donating reward to the deceased.
5. He supported seeking intercession from awliyā'a, prophets and in particular our Prophet ﷺ.
6. He supported seeking aid by calling upon awliyā'a and prophets and saying *Yā RasūlAllāh*.

Indeed, the above practices were supported by Alahazrat, but only Wahābīs consider the above as bidāh and polytheism. Wahābīs have been refuted by many scholars including Alahazrat himself. Deobandis defame Alahazrat by correlating misdeeds of ignorant public with his support of sufi practices. Where Alahazrat permitted *úrs*, he also forbade people from singing and dancing and disallowed men or women to attend such an *úrs* where practices contrary to shari'ah take place. He forbade women to visit graves absolutely – he did not attend Mawlid which were led by people who were not devout or narrated baseless stories and anecdotes.

We ask his detractors:

1. Did Alahazrat ever dissent from any established article in the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah – the Māturīdīs and Ashārīs?
2. If so, was it in any core belief or a secondary or tertiary issue?
3. And if so, where and how?

Alahazrat was a staunch Sunni and he refuted Wahābīs and Rafidīs among other heretics.

False Accusation 4: He Exaggerated the Rank of the Prophet ﷺ

Nadawi, probably afraid that scholars reading Arabic would not buy the slander, resorted to bald faced lies when he accused Alahazrat that he “believed RasūlAllāh ﷺ had complete knowledge of the unseen.” This is a patent lie. Alahazrat never said such a thing. In his most celebrated work on the knowledge of unseen granted to the Prophet ﷺ, he says:

Yes, the claim of even a speck of knowledge for anyone without being granted by Allāh tāālā is certainly kufr. It is also an invalid belief that the knowledge of [anyone in the] creation can encompass the knowledge of Allāh tāālā, and is against the opinion of most scholars. However, the knowledge about everything from the first day to the final day of judgement – that which has happened and shall happen, *mā kāna wa mā yakūn* – is only a small fragment from the infinite knowledge of Allāh tāālā. This fragment is not comparable even to a billionth part of a drop of water in relation to a billion oceans. Indeed, this ‘part’ is itself a small part of the knowledge of our master Muḥammad ﷺ. I have described all these issues in *Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah* and other books. ⁹⁸

There are other issues about the Prophet ﷺ being light, but nowhere did Alahazrat deny that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was a *bashar* or human. Another issue is whether the Prophet ﷺ is aware of everything that is happening in the world. Yet another issue is about the parents of RasūlAllāh ﷺ and whether they will attain salvation. It should be known that none of these issues were invented by Alahazrat; many elder scholars of ḥadīth and āqīdah have ruled similar to Alahazrat. At any rate, Alahazrat did not consider these issues to be core issues of creed, such that contradicting them causes one to go out of Islām. Alahazrat wrote lengthy monographs proving the veracity of these practices that he supported – some containing more than 200 references; but those who scorn him and revile him cannot muster even a dozen references against him, and when someone attempts to do that, either the reasoning is incorrect or derivation is absurd – and is promptly refuted by Sunni scholars. We encourage Deobandis and others who criticise Alahazrat to write a point by point refutation of his works, specifically highlighting any errors of citation or derivation in ḥadīth that they might find. And if they cannot, which they too know they cannot, why slander him? Do they not fear Allāh tāālā?

⁹⁸ *Tamhid e Īmān*; also see the English translation, *The Preamble to Faith*, p32.

False Accusation 5: He Was Shīáh / Influenced by Shīáh

Among the most mendacious claims made by his enemies is that he was either a closet Shīáh or influenced by Shīáh. The anecdotal evidence they present for this calumny is that the names of his forefathers are the kind preferred by Shīáh. Sub'ḥānAllāh! Alahazrat refuted Rāfidīs all his life – in all his fatāwā, he staunchly supported the position of Ahl as-Sunnah that Sayyidunā Abū Bakr and Sayyidunā Ūmar were superior in this ummah apart from extensive and exhaustive refutations of Shīáh and Rāfidīs. Indeed, one of the reasons Alahazrat and other Sunni scholars distanced from the Nadwah was because of the presence of Rafidīs and the Nadwah sought to ignore the differences we have with them as insignificant. Yet Nadawis defame Alahazrat for being Shīáh. No other scholar from his time until now has written so comprehensively against the Shīáh. Some of his monographs are mentioned below in praise of companions⁹⁹ which can never be written by a person with Shīáh tendencies:

1. *Radd al-Rifḍah*
2. *Adillah at-Ṭāyīnah fī Ādhān al-Mulāánah*
3. *Lumātu'sh Shamáh li Had'yi Shīāti'sh Shanīáh*
4. *Faḍāyil e Fārūq* ﷺ
5. *Aálām as-Ṣaḥābah al-Muwāfiqīn li'l Amīr Muāwīyah wa Umm al-Mu'minīn*
6. *Jamú'l Qur'ān wa Bima Ázzawhu li Ūthmān*
7. *Kalāmu'l Bahī fī Tashabbuhi's Ṣiddīq bi'n Nabiyy*
8. *Wajd al-Mashūq bi Jalwati Asmāyi's Ṣiddīqi wa'l Fārūq*
9. *Manāqib e Ṣiddīqah*
10. *Aḥādith ar-Rāwīyah li Mad'hi'l Amīr Muāwīyah*
11. *Maṭlā al-Qamarayn fī Ibānati Sabaqati'l Ūmarayn*
12. *Zulāl al-Anqā min Baḥri Sabqati'l Atqā*

⁹⁹ Monographs refuting Nāṣībīs and Khawārij who bear hatred towards Mawla Ālī are not mentioned here.

Praise of Scholars

Alahazrat went to Ganj-Murādābād in 1292 and met Shaykh Faḍl al-Raḥmān Ganj-Murādābādī; in that meeting, the shaykh asked Alahazrat about his opinion on Mawlid. Alahazrat said that he considered it *mustaḥabb*. The shaykh replied: “You people say that it is a praiseworthy bidāh, but I consider it a sunnah. Look at the companions – when they went on Jihad and travelled far and wide, what did they say in places they visited? Wouldn’t they say – a Prophet is born amongst us; Allāh tāālā has revealed the Qur’ān to him; he has such-and-such attributes; he has such superior qualities; he shows us such-and-such miracles. What else do we do in Mawlid?” Alahazrat stayed with the shaykh for three days and at the time of parting Alahazrat respectfully asked him for advice. The shaykh said: “Do not be hasty in takfīr” Alahazrat said to himself in his heart: “I only rule the blasphemers as kafirs” and the shaykh said: “Of course, anyone who utters a word of blasphemy is a kāfir.” Thereafter, he gave Alahazrat his own cap and took Alahazrat’s cap for himself.

Shaykh Muḥammad al-Marzūqī Abū Ḥusayn [1284-1365] the Mufti of Ḥanafis and Qāḍī of Makkah has said:¹⁰⁰

Indeed, Allah ta'ala has granted me an immense favour – I praise and thank Him for His Grace, by which I met the great scholar, the peerless savant, the researcher, the ocean of understanding, one endowed with insight; acclaimed for his intellect and applauded for numerous writings in creedal matters - the fundamentals and secondary issues, specific issues and for his overall knowledge; not to mention his refutations of heretics and apostates. I used to hear beautiful things about him and about his grand stature; I was also blessed with reading some of his works, radiant and illuminated with the light from the niche [of his knowledge] - his love had found place in my heart and had pervaded my soul and my mind.

sometimes, the ears fall in love before the eyes do

And when Allāh tāālā favoured me with this meeting - I saw with my own eyes, his incredible talents and attributes; I found him the standard of knowledge, a colossal lighthouse, an ocean of gnosis [*mārifah*] from which learning flows as a gushing stream, the genius, the bearer of knowledge as a bastion to mischief and its means; he who extends his tongue to safeguard the shariāh; and has a magisterial

¹⁰⁰ Attestation of the shaykh in *Ḥusāmu'l Ḥaramayn*.

command of kalām, fiqh, inheritance. Praised be Allāh, he is observant of Islamic etiquette and sunnah, wājib and farḍ; proficient in Arabic and mathematics - a sea of logic from wherein a seeker finds invaluable pearls. He who has made easy the way to knowledge of principles, even as he reigns supreme in those sciences.

The noble master, the great and meritorious scholar, Shaykh Aḥmad Riḍā Khān al-Baraylawi - may Allāh tāālā give him a long life and vouchsafe him in both worlds and safeguard his pen – the unsheathed sword upon the necks of renegades – may it never lose its sheen. Aāmin! O Allāh, Aāmin. When I met him and my eyes fell upon him - may Allāh tāālā protect him - I recalled the following verses:

***The harbingers had informed me much upon inquiry
Of Aḥmad ibn Sayīd, and his goodness
But then when I met him - No, by Allah!
My ears had not seen more beautiful than what my eyes now did.***

His Demise and His Will

Alahazrat passed away on Friday, the 25th of Ṣafar 1340. He was unwell for some time prior to his demise. In spite of illness and frailty, he would still go to the masjid, carried on a chair for all the five prayers, and he prayed in the congregation. In the last few months of his life, he was so weak that he could manage to go to the masjid only on Fridays. On the day of his departing, he made arrangements for the distribution of his property; one-fourth was given in charity and the rest was to be shared by his heirs according to shariāh. He dictated his final will 2 hours and 15 minutes prior to his demise and he signed it with his own hand ending with a final ṣalawāt, which was the last thing he wrote before embarking on his final journey. He breathed his last as the call for the Friday prayer beckoned: “Come to success..”

The following excerpt from his will exhorts Muslims to be steadfast on the path of sunnah:

The Messenger ﷺ is illuminated by the light [of Guidance from] Allāh; and his companions were illuminated by him ﷺ; the followers were illuminated by the companions who illuminated the mujtahid imams. We took the light from them and became illuminated – and we are telling you: take this light from us and it is necessary that you take it from us and become radiant. The light [that I ask you to take] is the true love of Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ, being mindful of their reverence, to serve the friends of Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ and to oppose

the enemies of Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ. If you find anyone disrespectful towards, or blaspheming against Allāh tāālā and His Messenger ﷺ – then regardless of how dear such a person is to you, distance from him immediately. If you see someone disrespecting the Prophet ﷺ, in howsoever infinitesimal manner, regardless of his stature or how much you venerate him, cast him away like you would remove a fly from a glass of milk.¹⁰¹

In the same will he has also said:

...all of you have been kind to me and never allowed me to suffer or face any hardship. You folk did my chores for me and did not let me do anything. May Allāh tāālā reward every one of you immensely. I am also hopeful that I will not be troubled in my grave because of any of you. I have forgiven Sunnis and absolved them of all my rights for the sake of Allāh. I humbly request you all to forgive me for any transgressions that I may have committed concerning your rights. It is obligatory for those present here to convey to those who are not present, and seek their pardon [for me on my behalf].

May Allāh tāālā be well pleased with him and elevate his ranks in paradise. The following obituary was published on the 3rd of November 1921, in *Akhbār e Mashriq*, Gorakhpur:

Death of a Scholar is the Death of a World

The outstanding teacher of Islām, the staunch adherent and promulgator of the Prophet's ﷺ sunnah, the embodiment of “*harsh on infidels*,” the foremost defender of the shariāh, Mawlānā, Ḥāfiẓ, Qārī, Muftī Shāh Aḥmad Ridā Khān – may mercies of Allāh tāālā be upon him – passed away in Bareilly on the 28th of October. Due to the throng of people, the funeral was held the next day in the Eid prayer grounds; he was interred in the abode of his elder son Mawlānā Ḥāmid Ridā Khān.

إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون



¹⁰¹ *Al-Waṣāyā*, compiled by his nephew Mawlānā Ḥasanayn Razā Khān.

Works

Alahazrat's student and scribe, Mawlānā Zafaruddin Bihārī compiled a list of his works in 1327, which numbered 350 at that time. It was published in Patna as *Mujmal al-Muáddad fī Ta'lifāt al-Mujaddid*.¹⁰² When Mawlānā Zafar returned to Bareilly in 1362 to help organise and publish Alahazrat's works, he supplemented the previous list, adding books written from 1327-1340, and the tally crossed 600 works in 50 subjects.¹⁰³ The names of 548 works are listed in *Anwār e Razā* and Mawlānā Ábd al-Mubīn Númānī lists 679 works in his *Musannafāt al-Ridawiyyah*, in 50 subjects which are grouped by categories in the table shown here, among which 531 are original works and 148 are annotations and glosses.¹⁰⁴ About 240 works have been published so far, and most of which are included in the 30-volume *Fatāwā ar-Ridawiyyah*. Some of his most important works are mentioned below.

1	Tafsīr, Tajwīd and Qur'ān Sciences	21
2	Áqāyid, Kalām, Criticism, Polemics	131
3	Ĥadīth, Uṣūl Ĥadīth	59
4	Fiqh, Uṣūl Fiqh, Terminology of Fiqh, Inheritance,	266
5	Taṣawwuf, Adhkār, Dream Interpretation, Morals, etc.	60
6	History, Biographies, Eulogies	37
7	Literature, Grammar, Lexicology, Prosody	7
8	Numerology, Jafar, Fractions, Calculations of Prayer Times, etc.	44
9	Algebra, Trigonometry, Arithmetic, Logarithms, Geometry	17
10	Astronomy, Astrometry,	27
11	Logic, Philosophy, Miscellaneous	10
Total Number of Books		679

¹⁰² Shaykh Muḥammad Yáqūbī mentions that he had seen this booklet in Shaykh Ibrāhīm's library in Damascus.

¹⁰³ *Ĥayāt e Alahazrat*, Vol.1, Zafaruddīn Bihārī.

¹⁰⁴ Ranging from a few pages to multi-volume works like *Jadd al-Mumtār* (in five volumes).

1. Kanz al-Īmān fī Tarjamah al-Qur'ān

*The Treasure of Faith: An Explanatory Translation*¹⁰⁵ of the Qur'ān

Arguably, the finest explanatory translation of the Holy Qur'ān in Urdu. The major highlight of which, meticulousness in using appropriate language, when referring to Allāh tāālā and His messengers; and utmost care in the translation of abstruse verses. This is also unique because explanations are weaved in the translation itself, and as far as possible, remain close to the literal word. Arabic idioms are dexterously translated with similar or equivalent Urdu idioms. Another highlight of the translation is *sahl mumtaniy* – impossibly simple – which Ghalib has extolled as “*the apex of beauty in poetry and the apogee of eloquence*”.¹⁰⁶ Shaykh Amjad Ālī al-Aázamī,¹⁰⁷ who initiated the project says that Alahazrat would dictate the entire translation extempore, which he would write down. Critics of his non-verbatim translations accuse him of creating fancy interpretations; whereas, these non-standard translations can be easily and satisfactorily explained by classical commentaries and other books on Qur'ānic sciences.

Many researchers have written books explaining the exquisiteness of the work in comparison to other Urdu translations. *Taskīn al-Janān fī Maḥāsini Kanz al-Īmān* by Shaykh Ābdu'r Razzāq Bathrālwi is noteworthy, in which he analyses and compares translations of about 170 verses and demonstrates the superiority of *Kanz*. Two other important monographs on this topic are that of Shaykh Madanī Miyān al-Kichauchawī¹⁰⁸ and Shaykh Akhtar Razā Khān al-Baraylawī.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ Someone criticised the usage and said that the Qur'ān cannot be translated and therefore, *tarjamah* is an inappropriate word to use; and according to him, it should rather be *tarjamah māānī al-qur'ān*.. But, both *Tāj al-Ārūs* [t-r-j-m] and *Shihāh* [r-j-m] say, by definition, **tarjamah** means, an ‘explanation of its meaning in another language.’

¹⁰⁶ *Urdu e Muāllā*, Letter to Ghulam Ghaus.

¹⁰⁷ Author of *Bahār e Sharīāt*, a comprehensive reference manual of Ḥanafī Fiqh in Urdu.

¹⁰⁸ *Imām Aḥmad Razā Aur Urdu Tarājīm e Qur'ān Kā Taqābuli Mutālāh* [A comparative reading of Urdu translations of the Qur'ān by Imām Aḥmad Ridā and by others] Mawlānā Sayyid Muḥammad Madanī al-Ashrafī al-Kichauchawī, *Al-Mizān:Alahazrat Number*, 1976.

¹⁰⁹ *Imām Aḥmad Razā Kā Tarjamah e Qur'ān Ḥaqāyiq ki Rawshnī Meiñ* [The translation of the Qur'ān by Imām Aḥmad Ridā in the light of facts] by Mawlānā Muftī Akhtar Ridā Khān al-Baraylawī, *Al-Mizān:Alahazrat Number*, 1976. The shaykh is a great-grandson of Alahazrat.

2. Ātāyā an-Nabawīyyah fi'l Fatāwā ar-Ridawīyyah

Bestowal of Prophetic Blessings in Raza's Rulings

A major fatāwā collection of rulings in Urdu, Arabic and Persian; known as *Fatāwā e Razawīyyah* in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. This collection comprises of fatāwā of only fifteen years, as many previous fatāwā were lost as duplicate copies were not made before dispatch. Alahazrat himself organised it and compiled extensive indexes, a practice uncommon in that age.¹¹⁰ Indeed, his pioneering efforts in indexing have remained largely unnoticed; the three separate indexes he made for his *Fatāwā* speak volumes about his creativity and initiative.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Indexing as a science is in itself, a fairly modern phenomenon. *The Society of Indexers* was established by Norman Knight and inaugurated in 1957 and the first issue of its journal *The Indexer* was published in 1958. *The American Society for Indexing*, inspired by the SI, was formed about ten years later in 1968-69.

See <http://www.asindexing.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3313>.

¹¹¹ Norman Knight, in his oft-cited article 'Book Indexing in Great Britain: A Brief History', from *The Indexer*, Vol. 6, p17, 1968, mentioning the pioneering efforts of indexers says:

Other excellent examples published during that century include *The analytical index to the works of Jeremy Bentham* (1843), compiled by J. H. Burton, George Birkbeck Hill's index to his own edition of *Boswell's Life of Johnson* (1887)—the *Life* (1791) had originally been indexed in characteristic fashion by the biographer himself—and the index to Wheatley's edition of the *Diary of Samuel Pepys* (1893-9).

In two of the mentioned works above, indexes for multi-volume books are compiled as a separate volume, Vol.9 in the case of *Diary of Samuel Pepys* and Vol.6 for *Boswell's Life of Johnson*. Alahazrat's approach to indexing is strikingly similar; even though he was contemporary, one can safely assume that he did not have access to the aforementioned works or had any knowledge of such developments. As far as I know, such detailed topic-wise indexing was practically non-existent in Urdu or Arabic literature at that time, and particularly in books of *Fatāwā*. Another issue is that an alphabetic index of words in English is much different than a topic index; Alahazrat's index is therefore, comparable with the second volume of *Index to Legal Periodical Literature* by Leonard A. Jones, published in 1899, who writes in its preface:

"The general plan of this volume is the same as that of my Index published in 1888, a portion of the Preface to which is now reprinted. In one respect, however, this volume differs, not in plan, but in result, from the former; and that is, it contains many more references to articles relating to Legal Science in general, and many more references to articles relating to Political Science, to Economics, and to Sociology; for in the years since the former Index was compiled, the Bar Associations organized in many States have published a great number of addresses, papers, and reports upon general, rather than technical, subjects connected with the law; and since that time also there have

Discussing indexes, Alahazrat says in the preface of the first volume:

This volume ends with the topic of *tayammum*.¹¹² Initially, I thought of dividing the *fatāwā* in 12 volumes, and each volume containing approximately 800 pages; and the first volume to contain the complete chapter on matters of purity.¹¹³ But, even after 850 pages, only the topics until *tayammum* could be covered. Hence, it was decided to close this volume here. At the outset, this volume contains only 114 *fatāwā* and 28 monographs. Yet, praised be Allāh tāālā, there are numerous issues on various subjects and sub-topics discussed in the course of these rulings; and hundreds of key points that may not be found elsewhere. We shall have two main indexes: the first, a topic-wise table of contents; and the second, a list of monographs contained within the volume. This volume contains rulings that mainly pertain to matters of purification/cleanliness, until the topic of *tayammum*; but in the course of discussing the main topic, and explaining the issue, many sub-topics and related issues are mentioned; from ritual purity to prayer, and then subsequent fiqh topics until [the topic of] inheritance; thereafter, issues other than *fiqh*, like topics on *āqidah*, *ḥadīth*, *usūl*, geometry, mathematics etc. Therefore, I think it is appropriate to split the first index into two parts:

a) Index of main topics, and according to the order of [fiqh] chapters

b) Index of related and secondary issues mentioned alongside the main topic of the *fatwā*.

Originally published in twelve volumes of approximately 800 large size pages each, this has been recently republished in thirty volumes¹¹⁴ of

appeared numerous periodical publications devoted to subjects which have an important, if not direct, bearing upon Law and Legislation”.

It should be noted that such pioneers were specialist indexers; and Alahazrat was an author who also made his own indexes. The legal index mentioned above was certainly not the work of one man.

¹¹² the dry ablution. That is, method of ablution when water is not available or cannot be used (for example, for people who are ill, etc.)

¹¹³ *Kitāb al-Ṭahārah*

¹¹⁴ Alahazrat’s own passages in Arabic and Persian, as well as citations, have been translated in Urdu and referenced throughout. Immense effort has been put in the making of this edition, though, there is still plenty of room for development. Handwritten *Nastaliq* by a skilled calligrapher is still preferable to a computer-composed page; vertical movement of ligatures in calligraphy is more elegant than wordprocessors until now. With due respect to the copyist, writing is of average quality and regresses in lengthy monographs in this edition. Arabic passages are handwritten though computer composing in Arabic is superior to calligraphy (for running text.) Another issue, is of inline translations written together with

approximately 800 A4 size pages each, totalling 22,000 pages containing 6847 fatāwā, which also contain 206 monographs.¹¹⁵ Another major highlight about the fatāwā is the number of scholars and muftis seeking answers and explanations; Alahazrat was the mufti's mufti - an authority towards whom leading scholars of the day turned for answers. According to one statistic, it was found that 1061 questions out of 4494 were asked by 541 scholars and notables.¹¹⁶ Fatāwā collections are usually one or two volumes, and by sheer volume only the *Fatāwā al-Hindiyyah* comes close to *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawīyyah*; and even that was compiled by more than 50 scholars. As for quality and content, most answers are a few lines or at most one or two pages; but Alahazrat's fatāwā are voluminous tomes, sometimes running into hundreds of pages with hundreds of references, apart from the *aqūl*¹¹⁷ – the insights of the Imām, his own analyses and derivations, which cannot be found anywhere else. In the first volume which has fatāwā only until *tayammum*, there are 3536 such instances.¹¹⁸

3. Jadd al-Mumtār ālā Radd al-Muhtār

*Sustenance for the Forager*¹¹⁹

Alahazrat's marginalia on *Radd al-Muhtār*¹²⁰ in Arabic in five volumes.

the original text which can be mistaken for the author's own words; whereas, they should appear as footnotes without getting mixed up with the original text.

¹¹⁵ A topic index and a word index are published in two separate volumes.

¹¹⁶ Mawlānā Khādim Ḥusayn Riḍawī in his paper, *Alahazrat ba Haysiyat e Marja' al-Ūlamā* [Alahazrat, An Authoritative Reference for Scholars] who compiled the list from only nine of the original 12 volumes.

¹¹⁷ "I say" which flags the opinion of the Imām.

¹¹⁸ Ẓafaruddīn Bihārī, *Hayat e Alahazrat*, 1/326

¹¹⁹ It is a characteristic of Alahazrat's naming scheme that he chooses homonyms often. This title can have two pronunciations and each can have a number of meanings:

a) *Jadd al-Mumtār*: The Sustenance of the Seeker; where **jadd** means Fortune, Sustenance [*ḥuẓwah, rizq, ghinā – Tāj al-Ārūs*] **mumtār** means, a person who goes out in search of food, sustenance; a forager. [**mayr**: to go out in search of sustenance – *Tāj al-Ārūs*.]

b) *Jidd al-Mumtār*: Hastening the Seeker; where **jidd** means 'to hasten,' 'effort' and also 'research'. Thus, *Jidd al-Mumtār* can have two meanings: 'Hastening the Forager' or a self-deprecating: 'Findings of a Forager,' or 'Effort of a Seeker.' [**jidd**: *ājalah; al-ijtihādu fi'l amr; al-tahqīq – Tāj al-Ārūs*]

4. Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah bi'l Māddah al-Ghaybiyyah

*The Meccan Jubilation of Unseen Aid*¹²¹

A treatise on the extensiveness of the knowledge of the Prophet ﷺ which he wrote in Makkah in merely eight hours and within two days upon the request of prominent Makkan scholars, Shaykh Ismā'īl Khalīl and Shaykh Muḥammad Sa'yīd Bābuṣayl and as a response to objections raised by Wahābīs in the assembly of the Sharīf¹²² of Makkah. Scholars of Ḥaramayn and those who visited Ḥaramayn in the following years, have written glittering recommendations which include prominent scholars like Imām Yusuf al-Nab'hānī. Incidentally, the book was delayed by a day because of his meeting with the great Moroccan ḥadīth scholar, Sayyid Ābd al-Ḥayy al-Kattānī (which is also mentioned in the latter's *Fahras al-Fahāris*).

5. Fuyūdāt al-Malikiyyah li Muḥibbi al-Dawlah al-Makkiyyah

The Royal Effluence for the Admirer of the Meccan Dominion

These are extensive footnotes and annotations to the book *Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah*. He expanded it further and refuted objections in the book *Ghayatu'l Ma'mūl* of Mawlānā Barzanjī, and a refutation of those who deceived the sayyid by accusing Alahazrat that he believed that the knowledge of Allāh tāālā and of RasūlAllāh ﷺ were the same and the only difference being pre-eternal and accident.¹²³ Deobandis repeat this lie often; and this is what Abu'l Ḥasan Nadawi also wrote in *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir*.¹²⁴ Alahazrat wrote two more annotations named *Inbā'a al-Ḥayy anna Kalāmahu al-Maṣūnu Tibyānan li Kullī Shayy* and *Ḥāsim al-Muftariyy āla al-Sayyid al-Barīy*.

¹²⁰ Imām Ibn Ābidīn's magnum opus which is universally acknowledged as an authoritative reference of the Ḥanafī madh'hab.

¹²¹ There is an interesting background to this name which I have explained in my other book *The Killer Mistake*. The name can also mean: *Meccan Jubilation concerning the issue of (knowledge of) the unseen*. It can be read *dūlah*, meaning turn-around.

¹²² The Sharīf of Mecca was the title of the former governors of Hejaz and a traditional steward of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. The Sharīf was a descendant of the Prophet ﷺ. In those days Ālī Pāshā was the Sharīf [1905 CE].

¹²³ Alahazrat's clarification is mentioned in a footnote of *Preamble to Faith* (2011).

¹²⁴ Abu'l Ḥasan al-Nadawi, *Nuz'hatu'l Khawāṭir*, 8/1180: "...and he believed that RasūlAllāh ﷺ had complete knowledge of the unseen".

6. Amn wa'l Ūlā li Nāyiti al-Muṣṭafā bi Dāfiy al-Balā'a

Safety and Sublimity for praising Muṣṭafā as the Remover of Affliction

Deobandis present one face to Arab Sunni scholars and another to the public in the subcontinent. A specific salawat known as the *Durūd Tāj* is widely recited in litanies. Rashid Gangohi and other Deobandis¹²⁵ claimed that it contained statements of polytheism because it includes the phrase 'Remover of Affliction' referring to RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Alahazrat refuted this by quoting approximately 60 verses and more than 200 ḥadīth and opinions of scholars, proving that Muṣṭafā ﷺ is indeed a remover of affliction.

7. Ḥadāyiq e Bakh'shish

Gardens of Salvation

A two-volume collection of the Imām's devotional poetry in the praise of the Prophet ﷺ and other hymns. The first volume contains 80 poems and 8 quatrains; the second volume contains 39 poems and 13 quatrains. It is beautiful, sublime and a most eloquent anthology of the Prophet's ﷺ praise in Urdu. This is a showcase of the Imāms poetical talent and his command of Arabic, Persian and Urdu. It includes the famous *Ode of Salutation* or the *Salām*; Its popularity in the Subcontinent and the diaspora is no less than that of *Qaṣīdah Burdah*. Every religious meeting of Sunnis ends with this beautiful *Salām*, whose opening lines are:

muṣṭafā jān e rahmat pey lākhoñ salām
shamā e bazm e hidāyat pey lākhoñ salām

8. Fatāwā al-Āfriqah¹²⁶

The African Rulings

This is a collection of answers to 111 questions on various topics sent by Hājī Ismā'īl from South Africa¹²⁷ in three dispatches. The person requested Alahazrat to translate citations into Urdu and publish it in the form of a book for common benefit. This was published in 1336.

¹²⁵ See *Fatāwā Rashidiyyah* and *Bihishti Zeywar*.

¹²⁶ *Al-Saniyyatu'l Anīqah fī Fatāwā Afriqah*

¹²⁷ In Butha-Buthe, Basutoland, a former British colony. Basutoland gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1966 and was renamed Kingdom of Lesotho, which is now a sovereign country as an enclave within the Republic of South Africa.

9. Fatāwā al-Ĥaramayn bi Rajafī Nadwah al-Mayn

Rulings of the Two Sanctuaries Quaking the Foundations of Deceptive Assembly

A collection of fatāwā refuting the Nadwah and its conglomerate of assorted heretics: Wahabis, Rāfiḍīs and Naturalists. This association was formed to unify Sunni scholars, but instead turned out to be a quasi-perennialist¹²⁸ society. Alahazrat and many Sunni scholars distanced themselves after the first conference, and refuted the Nadwah. This is a fatwā answering 28 questions and Alahazrat wrote it in merely twenty hours; this was sent to prominent scholars in the Ĥaramayn who attested it and praised the author.

10. Mustanad al-Mútamad Bināyi Najāh al-Abad

The Reliable Document: A Foundation for Everlasting Salvation

A marginalia on the work *Mútaqad al-Muntaqad*¹²⁹ of Shaykh Fadl ar-Rasūl Badāyūnī,¹³⁰ one of the foremost Sunni scholars who refuted Ismāʿīl Dihlawī. It is in this marginalia that Alahazrat issued the ruling of kufr on certain Deobandi scholars, and it is an extract of this fatwā that was presented to scholars of the two sanctuaries, who affirmed that the ruling was correct and wrote attestations which was collected in one volume as *Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn ālā Manḥar al-Kufri wa'l Mayn*.

11. Malfūẓ

The Dicta

A collection of sayings of Alahazrat in various gatherings collected and compiled by his son Mawlana Muṣṭafā Ridā Khān in four parts.

¹²⁸ Where perennialists argue that “all religions lead to truth,” Nadwa claimed to unify all who say *lā ilāha illā Allāh*, irrespective of their orientations, aberrations or heresies.

¹²⁹ The book is in Arabic.

¹³⁰ He was the student of Shāh Abdu'l Ázīz Dihlawi. By descent, he was from the family of the third Caliph, Sayyiduna Úthmān ؓ. A great kalām scholar and a Ĥanafī Imām, he wrote many books in defence of Ahl as-Sunnah and in exposing the heresies of Ismāʿīl Dihlawī and his fellow *Wahābīs*. He passed away in 1289 (1872). Among his books refuting Wahabism are *Bawāriq al-Muḥammadiyah* and *Sayf al-Jabbār*. His son, Shaykh Ábdu'l Qādir Badāyūnī was also a prominent Sunni scholar, and at the vanguard of those who refuted Wahabism; Alahazrat had very high regard for him and the feeling was mutual.

These sayings are mainly answers to questions on various topics containing numerous ḥadīth, verses, tafsīr, finer points of fiqh, insights on the two *usūl*, opinions on taṣawwuf, doctrine and anecdotes. In all, there are 610 questions and the answers contain 194 Qur’ānic verses, 306 Ḥadīth and 157 anecdotes, said extempore.¹³¹

12. Tamhīd e Īmān

The Preamble to Faith

A passionate appeal to Muslims to shun those who disrespect and insult the Messenger ﷺ and to remember that the basis of faith is love and respect of RasūlAllāh ﷺ. The verses of Qur’ān which exhort Muslims to love the Prophet ﷺ and to sever relations with those who attempt to diminish his lofty stature are cited and explained beautifully; statements of blasphemy by some religious leaders and the implications are analysed to explain the rationale behind the ruling of kufr.

13. Dhayl al-Muddā li Aḥsan al-Wiā li Ādāb ad-Duā:

A Desired Supplement for a Beautiful Receptacle on the Etiquette of Prayer

Mawlānā Naqī Ālī Khān wrote a book on supplication, the etiquette and essence of prayer and causes for prayers to be accepted or rejected titled *Aḥsanu’l Wiā*. Alahazrat wrote a commentary on this book and mentions points that are not found even in classic duā manuals like *Ḥiṣn al-Ḥaṣīn*¹³² and *Adhkār*.¹³³

14. Tajallī al-Yaqīn bi anna Nabīyyanā Sayyid al-Mursalīn

Radiance of Faith that our Prophet ﷺ is the Leige-Lord of all Messengers.

Someone¹³⁴ wrote to Alahazrat that the Wahābīs had started to deny that RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the leader of all messengers and prophets challenging

¹³¹ Preface to *Al-Malfūz*, Dāwat e Islāmī edition, Majlis al-Madīnah al-Īlmiyyah (2009).

¹³² Imām Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Jazarī [751-833 AH]

¹³³ Imām Yahyā ibn Sharaf an-Nawawī [631-676 AH / 1233-1277 CE]

¹³⁴ It is erroneously mentioned in later editions that the questioner is Alahazrat’s teacher Mawlānā Ghulām Qādir Beyg; whereas, the istiftā mentions: “someone introduced by Mawlānā.” It is also obvious from the opening lines in the answer where Alahazrat says: “if the questioner is a scholar... or if he is an ignoramus.” Firstly, it is obvious that Alahazrat does

Muslims to prove it from the Qur’ān and Sunnah. Alahazrat wrote this book with evidence from the Qur’ān and ḥadīth, which, apart from being a comprehensive answer is also a study in the biography of the prophet and aids comprehension¹³⁵ of ḥadīth and routes of narration.

15. Faḍl al-Mawhibī fī Māana: *idhā ṣaḥḥa’l ḥadīthu fa huwa madh’habī*
The Bestowed Grace in the saying: “The Ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth is my madh’hab”

Someone asked whether, in a particular issue one can contradict the Ḥanafī madh’hab – for example, *rafa’a yadayn* or praying *qunūṭ* with a single jalsah, with the rationale that it is acting upon a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth; and he quotes Ḥanafī texts which report a saying attributed to Imām Aázam: “When you find a ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth, that is my madh’hab.” This is touted by the anti-madh’habites to reject taqlīd. Alahazrat explains the context of the saying and that every ḥadīth with a ṣaḥīḥ chain does not automatically necessitate that it should be acted upon and gives examples from ḥadīth literature on the practice of ḥadīth specialists and jurists. This short epistle written as refutation is another fine example of his extensive knowledge of ḥadīth. It is unfortunate that Nadawi did not read this, or if he did, he did not understand it; if neither, he concealed this information out of jealousy – and made the baseless accusation that Alahazrat was not well-versed in ḥadīth.

16. Kifl al-Faqīh al-Fāhim fī Ahkāmī Qirtās al-Darāhim

Sufficient Provision for the Intelligent Jurist Concerning Currency Notes

During his second Ḥajj, two scholars of Makkah, Shaykh Ábdullāh Mīrdād and Shaykh Ḥāmid Jaddāwī posed ten questions concerning currency notes, which Alahazrat answered in less than two days. Shaykh Ábdullāh Şiddīq, the Chief Mufti of Ḥanafīs in Makkah found this book in the Ḥaram library soon after it was written and began reading it right away. Alahazrat was also sitting in the room, but the Shaykh did not recognise him. Incidentally, Shaykh Jamāl, the previous Chief Mufti of Makkah had issued a fatwā on the same issue, which was the prevalent reference, in spite of not being the definitive answer. Alahazrat quotes Ibn Humām as a key

not know the questioner; secondly, it is inconceivable that Alahazrat would speak to his teacher in such a dismissive tone.

¹³⁵ *dirāyah*

proof: “if a person sells a piece of paper for a thousand, it is permissible without any offensiveness about it.”¹³⁶ When Shaykh ʿAbdullāh reached this point, he slapped his thigh in amazement and said: “How could Jamāl miss this!” Thereafter, when Shaykh Ismāʿīl Khalīl introduced Alahazrat, he rose up and rushed to meet him, even though he was elder to Alahazrat. Deobandi scholars have also praised the juridical abilities of the Imām citing this book as an example.

17. Sub’ḥān as-Subbūh ān ʿAybi Kadhib Maqbūh

Glorification of the Sanctified from an Odious Flaw like Falsehood

A masterpiece of kalām refuting the absurd belief that falsehood is included in the Divine Power of Allāh tāālā. This was originally a Mūʿtazilī belief which had died with the Mūʿtazilah; it was revived in the subcontinent by Ismāʿīl Dihlawī and promoted by his followers – the elders of the Deobandi school. Khalīl Ambethwī wrote in *Barāhīn* that nobody from Ahl as-Sunnah argued against this idea and it was a matter of common difference. Alahazrat was only 35 when he wrote this in 1307 AH.

18. Qama’a al-Mubīn li Āmāl al-Mukadh’dhibīn

A Resounding Blow Dashing Hopes of the Beliers

Thirty years later, in 1338 AH, he wrote a follow-up to his *Sub’ḥān as-Subbūh*, refuting more deceptions of the Falsifiers; unfortunately, this monograph is found incomplete; and if it were completed, this would be the final nail in the coffin of the Falsifiers – the *kadh’dhabīyyah* sect.

19. Zubdah al-Zakiyyah li Taḥrīmi Sujūd al-Taḥīyyah

The Pure Cream: On the Prohibition of Prostration in Homage

A question is asked about a shaykh who permits prostration out of reverence and citing as proof, the case of angels prostrating to Sayyidunā Ādam and other such examples in the Qur’ān. Alahazrat refutes this heresy unequivocally proving from various ḥadīth. In fact, this work is an example of his superlative talent in derivation¹³⁷ from ḥadīth which was acclaimed even by his enemies.

¹³⁶ *Fat’h al-Qadīr*, Kitāb al-Kafālah, 6/324.

¹³⁷ Iṣṭinbāt.

The first few lines of his answer give the gist of the book: “O Muslim! O obedient follower of the Shariāh of Muṣṭafā! Know, and know it with certitude that one is not permitted to prostrate to anyone except to the Lord Almighty Allāh, Glorified is He. If one prostrates to anyone else in worship, it is base idolatry and patent disbelief; prostration out of reverence or greeting is strictly forbidden, ḥarām and an enormity; and whether it is kufr is debated by scholars – one group rules them kāfir, but upon examination, it is found to be extraneous kufr... indeed, prostrating to an idol or a cross, the sun or the moon will be ruled kāfir absolutely.”

20. Maqāmiy al-Ĥadīd ālā Khadd al-Manṭiq al-Jadīd

The Ironfisted Punch in the Face of Novel Speech.

A self-styled scholar wrote a book: *Manṭiq al-Jadīd*¹³⁸ on philosophical meanderings positing arguments which are patently against Islām. Alahazrat refutes this book with both rational and revealed proofs and using arguments of the philosopher himself. Alahazrat was only 32 when this was written in 1304, and senior scholars such as Mawlānā Irshād Ḥusayn Rampuri and Muḥammad Luṭfullāh attested it.

21. Āṭayā al-Qadīr fī Ḥukm al-Taṣwīr

The Bounties of the All-Powerful: Ruling upon Images of Living Things

Making pictures of living things is forbidden in Islām; hanging images is also forbidden. This is a comprehensive fatwā related to making and using images. Alahazrat did not permit animate images and mentioned a number of ḥadīth that forbid images of living things.

22. Jawd al-Ĥuluw fī Arkān al-Wuḍūʿ

Sweet Downpour: On the Mandatory Constituents of Ablution

This is a question asked by his student Mawlānā Ẓafaruddīn Bihari inquiring how many farḍ and wājib in wuḍū. Alahazrat explains the principles and classification of actions. Even though the original question is in Urdu, Alahazrat has given the fatwā mostly in Arabic because the questioner was himself an accomplished scholar. An important work on Uṣūl al-Fiqh and recommended read for every aspiring mufti and student of fiqh.

¹³⁸ Manṭiq here is used to mean the literal: ‘speech’ instead of ‘logic’.

23. Ĥājjiz al-Baĥrayn al-Wāqī án Jamíy al-Šalātayn

Barrier Between the Two Oceans Preventing Combining Two Prayers

This is a comprehensive answer to a question whether it is permissible to combine two prayers in one time upon a valid excuse. Alahazrat explains the Ĥanafī position and proves it from ĥadīth and practise of companions and tābiyīn. A two line question was accorded a 150 page answer which is an extensive study of fiqh, ĥadīth, narrators, narrator-criticism and comparative fiqh! This is mainly a refutation of *Miṣ-yāru'l Ĥaqq* by Nazīr Ĥusayn Dihlawī, the leading anti-madh'hab heretic who had an intense hatred of the Ĥanafī madh'hab. Alahazrat exposes the ĥadīth knowledge of the so-called mujtahid, and demonstrates that he is unfit to be considered an ordinary student of ĥadīth.

24. Šayqal al-Rayn án Aĥkāmī Mujāwarah al-Ĥaramayn

The Burnisher on Adopting Domicile in Haramayn

In response to a query whether it is permissible to migrate to Ĥaramayn leaving behind parents and children in India. Instead of just saying a yes or a no, Alahazrat reminds the questioner on the priorities and the duty of children towards parents and in the end explains the Ĥanafī position that it is not permissible to voluntarily choose to migrate to Ĥaramayn.

25. Radd ar-Rifḍah

Refutation of the Rafidīs

A Sunni sayyid lady passed away and her cousins, Rafidīs of the slandering kind [*tabarrāyī*] claimed inheritance from her. Alahazrat explains that not only is inheritance to a Rafidī impermissible, he explains how the Rafidī of our time is out of Islām – listing their heresies and the rulings of scholars concerning Rafidīs down the ages. A comprehensive refutation of Rāfidīs.

26. Qahr al-Dayyān álā Murtadd bi-Qādiyān

The Wrath of the Timeless: upon the Apostate in Qadian

Mirza Ghulām of Qādiyān, rose to prominence as a reformer, but thereafter his heresies came to the fore and he blasphemed against prophets and particularly Sayyidunā ʿĪsā ﷺ, and his mother Virgin Mary. Mirza went on to claim prophethood for himself and a number of weak Muslims fell prey to his cult. Some Qādiyānī converts challenged Sunni scholars for a debate and a number of articles and counter-articles were written. Alahazrat

listed a number of blasphemies uttered by the apostate Mirzā Ghulām and the conditions for debate titled: *Hidāyat e Nūrī ba Jawāb e Iṭṭilāʾ e Zarūrī*. A quick and ready guide for the blasphemies and heresies of Mirza with references from the apostate's own books.

27. Kawkabah al-Shihābiyyah fī Kufriyyāti Ab al-Wahābiyyah

The Thundering Fireball: Upon the Heresies of the Father of Wahabism

The seed of Wahābī heresy was planted by Ismāʿīl Dihlawī in India. Even though Deobandis pretend that they have nothing to do with Wahābīs, their elders were great admirers of Ismāʿīl (who was slain by upright Muslims in Balakot – but Deobandi/Wahābī followers colour it as a martyrdom) and his books *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān*, *Yidāh al-Ħaqq*, *Ṣirāṭ e Mustaqīm*, *Yak Rozī* and *Tanwīru'l Āynan* are extolled, read and celebrated in their circles. Rashīd Gangohi went so far as to declare in a fatwā, the possession of *Taqwiyatu'l Īmān* is a constituent of faith itself! In response to a question about this man, Alahazrat listed 70 statements of apostasy in his books and proved their being kufr by ḥadīth and fiqh. Deobandis slander Alahazrat and spread lies that he unfairly criticised Ismāʿīl. We invite Deobandis and other assorted Wahābīs to write a detailed refutation of this book and disprove Alahazrat.

In spite of these 70 statements of kufr, Alahazrat exercises extreme caution and abstains from making takfīr of Ismāʿīl and says: “Scholars are still discussing the difference between *luzūm* (necessitating) and *iltizām* (becoming necessary). It is one thing for a statement to be kufr, and an entirely different thing to rule the person kāfir on account of that statement..” He also says “Cautious scholars have preferred to withhold from making takfīr of this man..” Nuh Keller, an American translator who has also accused Alahazrat of being hasty in takfīr should take note of this work. I have refuted Keller in my book *The Killer Mistake*, first released in October 2013.

28. Sall al-Suyūf al-Hindiyyah ālā Kufriyyāti Bābā al-Najdiyyah

Drawing the Indian Sword upon the Apostasy of the Grandfather of Najdis

A follow-up as an abridged version of *Kawkabah* (See #27) in which Alahazrat analyses seven statements of Ismāʿīl and the reason they are disbelief as an answer to the same question which resulted in *Kawkabatu'sh Shihābiyyah*.

29. Šāfiyah al-Mūhiyah li-Ĥukmi Julūd al-Uđhiyah

Lucid Inspiration Concerning Hides of Sacrificed Animals

Is it permissible to sell the hide of sacrificed animals? Or is it necessary to give it away in charity? Is it permissible to sell the rope and stick used to tie the animal or should it be given as alms? Alahazrat explains in detail that jurists prevented selling sacrificial hides for the sake of merely making money; not to obtain benefit for oneself or others. The key premise for this ruling is the objective of sacrifice; which is to seek the pleasure of Allāh tāālā by spending money, not make money out of the sacrifice. The third answer is an inquiry and lexical analysis of the arabic word *khiṭām*, which means a strap or rope passing through the nose of the animal.

30. Jālī al-Naṣṣ fi Amākin al-Rukhaṣ

Clear Textual Evidence Concerning Situations for Exemption

Certain prohibited things become permissible at certain times and certain conditions; but what is the guideline concerning exemptions? This does not mean that every prohibited thing becomes permissible at some time or the other, nor does it mean that in every situation, there can be found an excuse or another. This short epistle describes rulings concerning exemptions and concessions in shariāh based on fundamental principles, seven of which are:

- a) Deterring evil is more important than obtaining benefit.
- b) Necessity causes prohibited things to become permissible.
- c) If one has to choose between two calamities, then choose the lesser evil.
- d) It is necessary to ward off injury, damage or harm.
- e) Disaster and crisis call for alleviation, also stated as: That which is constricted shall give way for accommodation.
- f) That which is forbidden to take, is forbidden to give.
- g) Deeds are according to their intentions.

Furthermore, exemptions fall in the following five categories: Necessity, Need, Benefit, Accessory or Adornment, Superfluousness.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ *ḍarūrah, ḥājah, munfaāh, zīnah, fuḍūl*

31. Barakāt al-Imdād li Ahl al-Istimdād

The Blessing of Aid for Those Who Seek Aid

The opening chapter of the Qur’ān teaches us to supplicate: “We seek help only from Thee.”¹⁴⁰ Is it not wrong to ask awliyā’a or prophets for help? Wahābīs cite this verse and claim that seeking help from anyone else is polytheism. In another verse: “Verily, I have turned my face only towards Him...”¹⁴¹ and claim that calling others is polytheism. Alahazrat proves by Qur’ānic verses and ḥadīth that seeking help from prophets and awliyā’a does not contradict the absolute injunction: “Thee alone we seek help.” Because when we seek help from Prophets and righteous people, we do that as intercession – and absolute help is from Allāh tāālā alone. He lists 33 ḥadīth which prove that seeking help¹⁴² from awliyā’a is permissible.

32. Ṣafāyih al-Lujayn fi Kawn at-Taṣāfuḥ bi Kaffay al-Yadayn

Strata of Silver: On Greeting With Both Hands

Among the many strange and literal interpretations of the anti-madh’hab sects is that they consider grasping both hands while shaking hands as a bidāh and that it is not permissible. They claim that it contradicts the ḥadīth as the word *yad* or ‘one hand’ is mentioned in the ḥadīth. Alahazrat had planned to answer it in detail the following Friday, and it slipped from his mind during the busy week. But he saw Imām Qādī Khān¹⁴³ in his dream who advised “Their reliance is upon the ḥadīth of Anas; but it does not avail them.” When Alahazrat opened his eyes, it was time for the Fajr prayer. While making wudū he thinks about the dream and recalls that the ḥadīth the imām indicated was the one found in Tirmidhī. Another masterpiece of ḥadīth analysis and derivation from ḥadīth.

33. Lumāh ad-Ḍuḥā fi Iyfā’a al-Liḥā

The Splendour at Noon: On Sparing the Beard

In the ḥadīth of *Bukhārī*, it is reported that RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: “Oppose the polytheists by trimming your moustaches and keeping ample beards.”

¹⁴⁰ Sūrah al-Fatiḥah, 1:5.

¹⁴¹ Sūrah al-Anāām, 6:79.

¹⁴² With the belief that they help only by Allāh’s leave and it is a form of intercession.

¹⁴³ Shaykh Imām Qādī Abu’l Qāsim Ḥasan ibn Maṣṣūr al-Awzjandī al-Farghānī (d.592/1196)

In *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, the ḥadīth is: “trim moustaches and spare the beards.” Keeping beards is undoubtedly a sunnah and there are numerous ḥadīth that mention the ample beard of the Prophet ﷺ. When a clean-shaven Magian emissary came to visit RasūlAllāh ﷺ, the Master ﷺ was visibly angry and reprimanded him: “But my Lord [Almighty Allah] has commanded me to keep the beard.” Shaving the beard was considered as the practice of eunuchs and transvestites in the past – but unfortunately due to influence of irreligious reformers, shaving beards has become a common practice among Muslims. Worse, people claiming to be scholars trim or shave their beards and permit the same for others. Alahazrat lists numerous ḥadīth and statements of scholars that condemn this act – which is ḥarām and a person who shaves his beard (or trims to less than a fistful) is a *fāsiq mūlin* – open transgressor.

34. Hādiy an-Nās fī Rusūm al-A’ārās

Guidance for the Masses Concerning Marriage Rituals

A number of abominable anti-Islamic practices have also crept in Muslim marriages. Things such as intermixing of sexes and singing profane songs, sharing lewd jokes in a mixed gathering of young and old, men and women. Setting off fireworks and other such things copied from other religions. Alahazrat explains the fundamental principle that any celebration should neither be wasteful, nor cause harm to others like fireworks etc. This is a collection of a few related fatāwā.

35. Adillah at-Ṭāyīnah fī Adhān al-Mulāánah

Incisive Proofs Refuting the Adhān of Cursing

The Shīáh add the sentence: *Álī is the Immediate Successor of RasūlAllāh* in their call to prayer. Is it permissible to listen to this? Is it similar to slandering the other khulafā? Alahazrat says, not that it reeks of *tabarrā*,¹⁴⁴ it is very much *tabarrā* itself. Such a call to prayer should be prevented by Sunnis where possible. In this booklet, Alahazrat cites their own sources to disprove their practice, which also sheds light on Alahazrat’s learning and that he had extensive knowledge of Rafidī literature as well.

¹⁴⁴ To distance from the three previous khulafa; the first three caliphs: Sayyidunā Abū Bakr, Sayyidunā Ūmar, Sayyidunā Ūthmān ؓ and implying the Shīáh belief that the first three were usurpers and therefore they slander them, which is known as *tabarrā*.

36. Ĥakk al-Āyb fī Ĥurmati Taswīd al-Shayb

Erasing the Blemish: On Prohibition of Dyeing One's Hair Black

Dyeing one's hair black – regardless of the kind of dye or what it is named – is ḥarām in our madh'hab, except for the warrior in Jihād. The ḥadīth of Muslim, Aḥmad, Abū Dāwūd, Nasāyī and Ibn Mājah from Sayyidunā Jābir clearly says: "Colour this [grey hair] with something, but avoid black." This short epistle explains the ruling concerning black hair dyes.

37. Masāyil e Samāʾ

Rulings Concerning Music and Singing

Listening to music is forbidden, ḥarām. Listening to recitation of chaste poems in praise of Allāh, his Messenger, exhortation toward noble deeds, praise of Awliyā'a without accompanying instruments is considered as permissible by sufis with conditions such as the reciter and listener should neither be boys [who are not pubert] nor openly disobedient Muslims. This epistle is an answer to five questions related to music, singing, dancing, musical instruments. In a previous fatwā Alahazrat has said: "The pristine shari'ah closes the door to evil [fitnā] and this thing [music] opens a huge doorway to sin and therefore how far removed it is from the noble shari'ah! One can see today many ornery, mannerless chumps, rough and boorish who do not even know the basics of ablution and toilet manners; such people who don't know what is farḍ, wājib, sunnah, makrūh and ḥarām in an ablution; yet they wear ochre robes and grow long hair like women and are engrossed in these satanic sounds day and night..."

38. Nūr wa'd Ḍiyā'a fī Aḥkāmi Báad al-Asmā'a

Light and Radiance Concerning the Permissibility of Certain Names

Names such as Muḥammad Nabī, Nabī Aḥmad should not be kept and it is forbidden to do so, as this description befits only RasūlAllāh ﷺ. Those with such and other improper names should change them as soon as they are informed about the dislikeability of such names. In a ḥadīth of *Tirmidhī*: "The Prophet ﷺ would change ugly names." In another ḥadīth found in *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* and *Abū Dāwūd*: "Verily you shall be summoned on the day of judgement called by your names and the names of your fathers. Therefore, choose good names." Alahazrat clarifies and examines some names in this epistle and explains whether such names are permissible or not and if not, why. He also mentions ḥadīth that mention the desirability of naming sons as Aḥmad or Muḥammad.

39. Nuzūl e Āyāt e Furqān Ba-Sukūn e Zamīn O Āsmān

The Revelation in Furqan: That the Earth and Heavens are at Rest

The verse of Sūrah Fāṭir: *Verily it is Allāh who sustains the heavens and the earth; lest they perish* was mentioned by a scholar and friend of Alahazrat in defence of the heliocentric theory. Alahazrat refuted this opinion citing many ḥadīth and verses.

40. Shumūl al-Islām li Usūli al-Rasūl al-Kirām

The Honourable Forebears of the Messenger are Included Among Muslims

The parents of Muṣṭafā ﷺ are Muslims and will attain salvation. Some scholars differed, but the majority of Sunni scholars – in their love and respect to RasūlAllāh ﷺ incline toward the former opinion of salvation. Imām Jalāluddīn Suyūṭī wrote a number of epistles proving this and refuted a contemporary scholar who held the contrary opinion and said:

“...and let him spend all his energies to [prove it] if he is capable enough. When his reach falls short, and his knowledge reaches its limit, he extends his tongue and doles out abuses and insults. We belong to Allāh; there is no strength nor power except granted by Allāh...if he wishes me to revise the opinion which I have preferred, [meaning Islām of RasūlAllāh's ﷺ parents] even if I am shred to pieces I shall not repeal my judgement. And I intend not from it [being steadfast] except for siding with the right.”

Alahazrat lists ḥadīth and verses proving salvation and names 35 major ḥadīth and fiqh imams who have explicitly attested to this belief.

41. Ḥāyat al-Mawāt fī Bayāni Samā'a al-Amwāt

Revitalising the Lifeless: On the Issue of the Dead Being Able to Hear

Some Wahābīs are vehement and insist that the dead cannot hear; this is because it is one of the key premises to reject help and intercession of awliyā'a. Alahazrat received a fatwā for verification and attestation – which claimed that seeking intercession of awliyā'a was either polytheism or at least resembles polytheism. Alahazrat wrote this lengthy monograph and explains the following issues in detail: hearing of the dead, making duāa near graves of pious Muslims. In one section he quotes 60 ḥadīth, and another section lists sayings of 175 ṣaḥābah, tābiyīn and prominent imams who believed the dead can hear. In yet another section of the book, he has listed 200 citations – not just names but relevant quotes. This work has

attestations of famous scholars such as Imām Aḥmad Zayn al-Dahlān who wrote: “I have seen this blessed work, which is full of elegant proofs; I have found it to be a text that promotes the beliefs of righteous people [*ahl al-ḥaqq*] and annihilates false beliefs of heretics and renegades.” Shaykh Sayyid Ibrāhīm ibn al-Khayyār says: “How many refutations upon refutations of ūlamā have I seen against misguiding heretics! But I have not seen anything like this epistle!”

42. Zahr al-Bāsim fī Ḥurmati al-Zakāh ālā Banī Hāshim

The Smiling Flower: Concerning Prohibition of Zakāt to Banu Hashim

Is it permissible to give Zakāt to Banū Hāshim – especially the descendants of RasūlAllāh ﷺ, and consider it as the one-fifth? Alahazrat answers this question in detail and explains that it is forbidden to give Zakāt or any other charity to RasūlAllāh’s ﷺ family, the Banū Hāshim.

43. Ākid al-Taḥqīq bi Bāb al-Tālīq

The Definitive Research in the Issue of Conditional Divorce

If the decision of something is dependent on a stipulated condition in the future, it is known as *tālīq*. If one issues a divorce stating a condition, the divorce is effected whenever the condition is met in the future. A person issued such divorce and retracted later claiming that his intention was generic and not specific; a Deobandi mufti issued a fatwā dismissing the divorce based on a number of false premises. Alahazrat explains the issue of *tālīq* in detail, which is now a reference for all Ḥanafī muftis. The question was in Persian and Alahazrat’s answer is also in Persian.

44. Iqāmah al-Qiyāmah ālā Ṭāyīni al-Qiyāmi li Nabīy Tihāmah

Misery of Doomsday for those who Scorn Standing in Respect for the Prophet

During celebrations of the birthday of the Prophet ﷺ, when the birth of the Prophet ﷺ is mentioned, the audience stands up in respect. Wahābī and Deobandi groups frown on celebrating the Prophet’s birthday – indeed, Rashīd Gangohi and his student Khalīl Ambethwi considered celebrating the mawlid as a pagan festival; and standing up in respect therefore (according to them) is an ugly innovation which was not present in the first three centuries of Islām. Alahazrat clarifies the Sunni position and refutes the ludicrous claim that anything not present in the first three centuries is an ugly bidāh.

45. Maḥajjah al-Mu'tamanah fī Āyāt al-Mumtaḥanah

The Safe Haven: In the Verse of Mumtaḥanah

As far as worldly relations are concerned, it is not against Islām to cooperate with Christians or people of other religions – in respecting¹⁴⁵ their rights as humans, neighbours and so forth; being fair in dealing with them and being just; neither deceiving them, nor betraying their trust. Alahazrat writes:¹⁴⁶

Bearing love and affection,¹⁴⁷ is entirely different from giving consideration and conducting transactions¹⁴⁸ with someone. The difference between the two, is like the distance between the sky and the earth. It is permissible to conduct transactions and have dealings with anyone, except with apostates like Wahābīs and Deobandīs,¹⁴⁹ in worldly matters, and [matters] in which there is no harm for religious obligations. The *Dhimmi*¹⁵⁰ is similar to a Muslim in all such dealings: "They shall have the same rights and obligations as us".¹⁵¹ It is permissible to conduct transactions even with non-dhimmis.¹⁵² Transactions like buying and selling, leasing and renting, giving and accepting gifts (upon the condition that these gifts are permitted by the shari'ah); and to purchase anything from them, when such goods are of benefit for Muslims; and to sell them anything except weapons¹⁵³ or such things that may be (mis)used to insult Islām.

¹⁴⁵ *Respect*, as in 'being mindful' and 'consideration.'

¹⁴⁶ *Maḥajjatu'l Mu'tamanah fī Āyati'l Mumtaḥanah*, Imām Aḥmad Ridā Khān.

¹⁴⁷ *mawālāt*

¹⁴⁸ *mu'āmalāt*

¹⁴⁹ That is, the apostates among them. Because, in our times, many who call themselves as Deobandīs are not aware of the heresies of their elders, unlike in Alahazrat's time; and not all Wahābīs in our time can be ruled as apostates. Allāh tāālā knows best.

¹⁵⁰ *dhimmī*: a non-muslim living in Muslim lands and under Islamic rule. Literally 'those under Muslim protection.'

¹⁵¹ In worldly matters. *lahum mā lanā wa ālayhim mā ālaynā*.

¹⁵² *Non-dhimmi*: those non-muslims who may live in Muslim lands but do not pay jizyah; or do not live in Muslim lands at all.

¹⁵³ That may be used against Muslims in war. A hundred years ago, these were swords and sticks; but in our times, non-Muslims have far more powerful weapons, which makes this condition irrelevant.

So also, it is permitted to employ them to do things that are not contrary to the shari'ah; and to accept employment of non-muslims in permissible activities that are not humiliating [to Muslims]; so also is hiring them and getting hired by them. It is permissible to give them gifts as goodwill¹⁵⁴ as long as such gifts do not honour the rituals and religious customs of infidels,¹⁵⁵ and to accept their gifts as long as such gifts do not contravene or criticise Islām.¹⁵⁶ It is even permissible to marry a Christian or Jewish woman. As long as they make peace with us, we shall be inclined towards them [in amity] – as long as such treaties do not force us to make *ḥalāl* as *ḥarām* and vice versa.¹⁵⁷ So also, [it is allowed] to have contracts with them, and have covenants with them to a certain extent;¹⁵⁸ and when such a permissible covenant is made, it is obligatory to fulfil it and it is forbidden to betray or renege from such promises.

Whether in Muslim lands or not, co-existence and cooperation with non-Muslims was never forbidden in worldly matters. This does not mean that Muslims can compromise on religious obligations or appease non-Muslims by embracing their religious traditions, ceremonies or condone them. This is a seminal treatise on living in harmony with others and at the same time maintain our religious identity and be firm upon our religion.

46. Samḥ al-Nadarā fīmā Yūriṭh al-Ājza min al-Mā'a

Exemptions in Exceptional Conditions Causing Disability from Using Water

Alahazrat explains 175 instances when one is exempt from using water for ablution. Some examples: If a woman has to do wuḍū and she is in the presence of a non-maḥram man; she should not reveal her arms but do tayammum instead. This is perhaps again unique to Alahazrat that some

¹⁵⁴ *maṣlahat e shara'yī*: for a valid reason and not contrary to shari'ah; for diplomatic or political reason and for the long term benefit of Muslims.

¹⁵⁵ For example, gifting a Cross to Christians or gifting idols or unislamic religious motifs. However, giving any other gifts to Christians, Hindus or any other non-Muslims is permissible as explained earlier.

¹⁵⁶ For example, it is not permissible to accept a bottle of wine or figurines considered as gods by Hindus.

¹⁵⁷ That is, as long as our religious matters are not disturbed. For example, usury is *ḥarām* and polygamy is *ḥalāl*.

¹⁵⁸ Permitted by the Shari'ah.

monographs are nested within another. One possibility of inability (and hence excuse) of using water is when the time for Salah is constrained and if one does an ablution, he/she may not be able to pray in time; which is one of the 175 instances. But then, Alahazrat saw the need to elaborate on it and address associated issues, so he wrote a nested monograph: *Žafar li Qawli Zufar*. Imām Zufar permits this case in opposition to the three imams of the madh'hab: Imām Aázam, Abū Yūsuf and Imām Muḥammad. Alahazrat inclines towards Imām Zufar's position and verifies another report from all three imāms that agrees with Imām Zufar; moreover it is corroborated from a number of secondary aspects in other fatāwā.

47. Tanwīr al-Qindīl fī Awṣāf al-Mindīl

Illuminating Lights: Commending the Use of Towel

Do we lose reward if we dry our face with a towel after ablution? Alahazrat replies that one does not lose reward by drying with a towel after ablution. He lists a number of ḥadīth that indicate using a towel after ablution is praiseworthy.

48. Ijāzāh al-Matīnah li Ūlamāyi Bakkah wa'l Madīnah

Exuberant Authorisations for the Scholars of Makkah and Madīnah

Alahazrat listed all his authorisations to various ūlamā of Makkah and Madīnah. In his authorisations to prominent ūlamā he mentions various isnads he has from his masters.

49. Niým al-Zād li Rawm al-Ďād

Excellent Provision: On the Ephemeral Pronunciation of Ďād

This is an answer to a query on the pronunciation of the letter *Ďād* and its phonology. The question is in Persian and Alahazrat also answers it in Persian.

50. Lumá al-Aḥkām án lā Wuḏū'u min al-Zukām

Radiance of the Ruling that Ablution is Not Necessary for a Runny Nose

Someone asked whether the wuḏū will be nullified on account of a running nose. Alahazrat replies (as the title informs) that it is not necessary. However, Alahazrat evaluates the state of impurity of various things.

51. Zulāl al-Anqā min Bahri Sabqah al-Atqā

Pure and Sweet Water from the Ocean of The Primal Pious

This discusses the tafsir of the verse: **wa sa-yujannabuhā al-atqā**, and that it was revealed commending Sayyidunā Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. It is one of Alahazrat's lengthy monographs in more than 200 pages.

52. Qawāriy al-Qahhār ála al-Mujassimah al-Fujjār

Blows of The Powerful upon Anthropomorphist Villains

Islamic belief does not admit anthropomorphism. But there are a few sects that insist on literal interpretation of verses and ḥadīth rendering a number of things anthropomorphic. In our times, the so-called Salafis and Wahabis have anthropomorphic ideas. In India, like other modern heresies, this too was introduced by Ismāyīl Dihlawī. Alahazrat lists fifteen statements of belief from a Sunni perspective.

1. Allāh táālā is free from every fault or flaw or shortcoming.
2. Everybody, everything is dependent upon Him; and He is not reliant on anything or anybody.
3. He is transcendent from bearing any resemblance to the creation.
4. He does not change; He is as He was in pre-eternity and He shall be forever and ever like He is now. It is *muḥāl* for something to happen or that which can alter Him.
5. He is not a body and He is Transcendent from everything that is suggestive of bodies.
6. He is transcendent from magnitude; one cannot say this much, this big and so forth. [He is not] tall, wide, thick, thin, little or more, countable or weighable, big or small, heavy or light.
7. He is transcendent from having a shape – [He is] neither wide or narrow, nor spherical or long, nor triangular or conical, nor straight or oblique nor any other shape.
8. He is transcendent from having limits or extents; and in this sense He is neither unlimited in the sense of being [physically] spread out without limit; that is, He is free from any concept of magnitude. In other words, when we say He is transcendent from limits we mean negation of imposing any limits; not attestation of unlimited magnitude.

9. He is not made from anything.
10. Parts and sections cannot be conceived or considered in Him, even hypothetically.
11. He is free from directions or [having] edges or [being on a] side. One cannot say that He is on the right or left; direction means front and back; similarly, [in this sense] He is not above.
12. He is not joined with anything in the creation such that He is attached.
13. He is not detached from the creation – to mean that there is a [physical] distance between Him and the creation.
14. He is transcendent from place and location.
15. He is transcendent from standing, sitting, descending, ascending, walking, stopping etc., and all conditions and necessities for bodies.

53. Taḥbīr bi Bāb al-Tadbīr

The Writing: Concerning the Issue of Planning

Everything is according to the destiny and decree of Allāh tāālā. But planning for something within sharaʿī bounds is certainly not against this belief. We live in a world dependent on means; and Allāh tāālā in His infinite Wisdom has ordained means to be connected with effects. This monograph contains 40 ḥadīth that approve of planning and that planning does not contradict faith in Divine Decree.

54. Surūr al-ʿĪd al-Saʿīd fī Ḥill al-Duʿā Baʿda Ṣalāt al-ʿĪd

Joy of the Blessed Eid: On Permissibility of Supplication After Ṣalāt of Eid

Mawlānā ʿAbd al-Ḥayy Lucknawī [1264-1304] has said in his fatwā that supplication after the Eid prayer and *khuṭbah* is not proven, nor found in the practice of RasūlAllāh ﷺ or the companions. Based on this fatwā, the Wahābīs have caused another fitna calling this a bidāh. Even Deobandi muftis are divided on this issue. Alahazrat proves from ḥadīth that doing so is permissible and praiseworthy and those who call it a bidāh are in error; the second part clarifies the fatwā of Lucknawī.

55. **Ismāʾ al-Arbaʿīn fī Shafāʾti Sayyid al-Mursalīn**

Hearing the Forty: On Intercession of the Master of all Messengers.

Someone asks: “In which ḥadīth is it mentioned that the Prophet ﷺ is an intercessor?” Alahazrat cites forty ḥadīth that prove RasūlAllāh ﷺ is the greatest intercessor.

56. **Budūr al-Ajillāh fī Umūr al-Ahillāh**

Prominent Moons: Concerning Crescents

The sighting of the crescent is important to calculate the start of the month; and thus the beginning and end of Ramadān, and to calculate the beginning of Dhi'l Ḥijjah in which the Ḥajj takes place. Therefore there are a number of rules governing viewing, informing, bearing and accepting witness about the crescent and so forth. In this monograph Alahazrat explains all the rulings concerning new moons in two sections:

1. Fifteen points concerning the importance of sighting the crescent and associated issues and rulings.
2. Twenty points concerning unreliable methods of establishing the crescent and associated issues.

Alahazrat wrote a commentary *Nūr al-Adillāh li'l Budūr al-Ajillāh* and a gloss *Rafū al-Īllāh ān Nūr al-Adillāh* on this monograph.

57. **Munīr al-Āyn fī Ḥukmi Taqbīl al-Ib'hāmayn**

Illuminating the Eyes: The Ruling on Kissing Thumbs

Ḥanafī imāms have said that it is mustaḥabb to kiss thumbnails when the name of the Prophet ﷺ is mentioned in the call to prayer. Ibn Ābidīn in *Radd al-Muḥtār* and Quhistānī,¹⁵⁹ based on the ḥadīth of Daylami narrated in *Musnad al-Firdaws*: “Wiping the eyes with the tips of both index fingers after kissing them when the mu’adhdhin says: **ash’hadu anna Muḥammadan rasūlullāh** and say: I bear witness that Muḥammad ﷺ is His Slave and Messenger, I am pleased with Allāh tāālā as my Lord, with Islām as my religion and [Sayyidunā] Muḥammad ﷺ as Messenger”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁹ Shamsuddīn Muḥammad al-Quhistānī [d.950 or 962] in *Jāmi yu'r Rumūz*, a commentary on *Nuqāyah* by Ṣadrū'sh Sharīʾah Imām Ūbaydullah ibn Masūūd al-Maḥbūbī [d.747].

¹⁶⁰ Sakhāwī, *Maqāṣidu'l Ḥasanah*, #1021.

Sakhāwī ended his comment on the above ḥadīth in the words: “No ṣaḥīḥ marfūʿ¹⁶¹ narration is established in this matter.” Those who consider it a bidāh quote this statement and insist that the ḥadīth is false. Alahazrat explains how “it is not ṣaḥīḥ” does not necessarily mean it is false. Ṣaḥīḥ is a term used for the highest level of authentication; and not-ṣaḥīḥ may also mean ḥasan and ḍaʿīf, which are accepted in such supererogatory matters.

58. Ḥād al-Kāf fī Ḥukm al-Ḍiʿāf

Essential Guidelines Concerning Weak Narrations

One of the prevalent diseases in our time is the mindless parroting of common people about a ḥadīth being ‘weak’ or *ḍaʿīf*. Particularly among the heretical sect that calls itself Ahl Ḥadīth or Salafī. Excepting a handful in this sect, who also make blunders, the rest are ignorant of ḥadīth principles; yet, they arrogantly scoff: ‘*that ḥadīth is weak.*’ Whenever one encounters such folk trying to appear too clever by half, they should be asked to explain the basic classification of ḥadīth; most likely, they will fail in the first screening. The so-called *Ahl e Ḥadīth*, who do not follow any Imām and disparage taqlīd are incapable of understanding the ḥadīth in Bukhārī – can any of them pick up an unannotated version of Bukhārī and explain the ḥadīth on their own or analyse the narrators without resorting to any commentary or dictionary – because repeating an Ibn Ḥajar or Ḍaynī is nothing but *taqlīd*. Here are a people who cannot even read Bukhārī in Arabic, and rely on defective translations – but yet have the temerity to scoff taqlīd, even though ḥadīth masters like Ibn Ḥajar, Ḍaynī, Suyūṭī, Qārī or Zabīdī were muqallids a followed a specific madh’hab. There is a unanimous agreement among ḥadīth specialists and jurists that a weak ḥadīth can be used as evidence in supererogatory deeds, morals, commendations and encomiums. Indeed, weak ḥadīth is not sufficient to establish an article of faith, or a *farḍ* or *wājib*; nor enough to rule something ḥarām. But it does not mean that it is false – nor that it should be discarded without a second thought. Imām Nawawī has said: “Scholars have agreed that it is permissible to act upon weak ḥadīth in matters of supererogatory deeds or commendations..” In this seminal tract Alahazrat explains the principles and practice concerning weak ḥadīth citing more than sixty ḥadīth and fiqh authorities.

¹⁶¹ That which is traced back to RasūlAllāh ﷺ as his own word, action or assent.

59. Nahy al-Akīd án al-Ṣalāti Warā'a Ídā al-Taqlīd

Definite Prohibition: On Praying Behind Enemies of Taqlīd

Is it permissible to pray behind those who reject taqlid of the four imāms? Those who call themselves as Salafis or Ahl e Ḥadīth in our times and consider following an imām as bidāh and some people even call it polythesim! This monograph was written to refute them and as he himself says: “it is not right to pray behind a ghayr-muqallid; and together I shall mention their beliefs, the state of their being and their subterfuge among other issues” An extensive discussion and refutation of Anti-Madhabīs in which Alahazrat quotes numerous ḥadīth.

60. Anwār al-Intibāh fi Ḥilli Nidāyi Yā RasūlAllāh

Rays of Awakening: On the Permissibility of saying “Ya RasūlAllāh”

A Muslim who believes that only Allāh tāālā is God and RasūlAllāh ﷺ is His Messenger says after his prayers: *aṣ-ṣalātu wa's salāmu álayka yā RasūlAllāh*¹⁶² and *as-aluka'sh shafā'ah ya RasūlAllāh*.¹⁶³ Is it permissible to say so? And what is the ruling concerning those who claim that it is kufr and polytheism?

Alahazrat replies that it is permissible and major scholars of ḥadīth and fiqh have permitted it such as Imām Subkī, Államah Fāsī, Államah Áli al-Qārī, Shaykh Ábd al-Ḥaqq al-Dihlawī, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haytamī, Imām Khayruddin Ramli, Shāh Waliyullah¹⁶⁴ etc. and they cite the ḥadīth of Tirmidhī,¹⁶⁵ in which a blind companion was taught duāā by RasūlAllāh ﷺ in which the phrase, *yā RasūlAllāh* is mentioned. Indeed, every Muslims utters this phrase in his obligatory prayers everyday in *tashahhud* when he says *as-salamu álayka ayyuha'n nabiyy*.

¹⁶² Blessings and salutations be upon thee O Messenger of Allāh.

¹⁶³ I ask thee to intercede for me, O Messenger of Allāh.

¹⁶⁴ In his poem: *Aṭyab al-Nagham fi Mad'hi Sayyid al-Árabi wa'l Ájam*, Section Eleven and in *Mad'hiyyah Hamziyyah*. Not just as expression in poetry but in the commentary of both verse, he himself specifically mentions seeking help from RasūlAllāh ﷺ. In the beginning of the qaṣīdah *Aṭyab* he says: “Mention of some tribulations in our time, and to seek help [intercession] from the soul of RasūlAllāh ﷺ is necessary”.

¹⁶⁵ which according to Ḥākim fulfils the conditions of Bukhārī and Muslim and also reported in Ṭabarānī and Bayhaqī.

61. Aḥlā Min al-Sukkar li Ṭalbatī Sukkar Rosar

Sweeter than Sugar; for those Seeking Sugar of Rosar

Sugar cane juice is brown in colour and raw sugar is also brown. In the refining process, activated carbon is used to decolorise sugar. In the past¹⁶⁶ activated carbon was mostly in the form of bone char or animal charcoal obtained by burning animal bones in an oxygen-depleted atmosphere. Alahazrat was asked about sugar in which animal charcoal was used, and the mill owners did not bother or care whether those bones were of ḥalāl animals or slaughtered in ḥalāl fashion. Before answering the question, Alahazrat presents ten preliminaries – actually detailed discussion of principles of fiqh – and based upon which, he issues the ruling concerning such sugar.

62. Hādī al-Ḥājib ān Janāzah al-Ghāyib

Guide to the Barrier that Prevents Funeral Prayer in Absentia

The Ḥanafī madh'hab stipulates that the body of the deceased be present for funeral prayer. In this short epistle Alahazrat answers the following questions concerning funerals:

1. Is it permissible to repeat the funeral prayer after the kin of the deceased have already finished their prayer?
2. Is it permissible to perform funeral prayer for someone in absentia?
3. If the imām is a Shāfi'ī and he prays funeral in absentia or repeats a prayer, is it permissible for Ḥanafīs to follow him?

In summary, it is not permissible to repeat the prayer, if the kin of the deceased have already performed the funeral prayer; Alahazrat quotes 207 citations from 85 sources to validate his answer. He has also explained it in another epistle *Nahy al-Ḥājiz ān Takrāri Ṣalāti'l Janāyiz*. Answers to the second and third question are also negative: it is not permissible to pray in absentia, neither alone nor following others.

¹⁶⁶ Apparently, it has now been replaced by modern methods of decolorisation. See <http://www.sucrose.com/rdecol.html>; also see <http://www.sucrose.com/lref.html> for information on sugar refining.

63. Iljām as-Şādd ān Sunan al-Ďād

Reining the Inhibitor of the Sunnah in Pronouncing the Letter Ďād

Many people in non-Arab countries – and even in Arab countries – pronounce the letter *Ďād* incorrectly. People in India and Iran convert it to *z* and some Arabs convert it to *ż* as in *żālim*. But what makes this worse is the laxity of scholars who are themselves heedless in uttering letters properly. It is mandatory for every Muslim to try and learn to pronounce the letters of the Qur’ān; and they are exempt only if they have tried their best but have physical or linguistic disabilities.

64. Barakāt al-Samā’a fī Ħukmi Isrāf al-Mā’a

The Munificence of the Heavens: Rulings on Wastage of Water

One usually finds a few lines in books of fiqh on wasting water in ablution (or otherwise) being impermissible. Alahazrat has written an extensive treatise of 160 pages on this seemingly simple topic citing numerous texts and highlighting various aspects and which, like many of his works is perhaps the only such book dedicated to the topic.

65. Anfas al-Fikar fī Qurbān al-Baqar

Refined Thoughts Concerning Sacrificing of Cows

In the guise of seeking fatāwā some people seeking to ban cow slaughter asked a few questions whether it was obligatory to slaughter cows. Some scholars fell for the ruse and said it was not – but Alahazrat recognised it right away and refuted this strategem of idol worshippers and explained the difference between not doing something and specifically abstaining from something – not sacrificing a cow is not a sin, but to specifically abstain from sacrificing a cow is not permissible either.

66. Qaṣīdatān al-Rā’iyatān

Two Elegant Odes

Alahazrat has written two odes totalling 313 verses in praise of Shāh Faḍlu’r Rasūl Badāyūnī, one of the foremost Sunni scholars in India and the defender of Ahl as-Sunnah who stood undeterred in the face of Wahābī onslaught. He was born in 1213 and passed away in 1289. *Sayfu’l Jabbār, Bawāriq e Muḥammadiyyah, Taṣḥīḥu’l Masāyil, Mútaqad al-Muntaqad, Fawzu’l Mu’minīn, Talkhīṣ al-Ħaqq, Iḥqāqu’l Ħaqq, Sharḥ Fuṣūṣu’l Ħikam, Risalah e Ṭariqat*, Marginalia on commentary of Mīr Zahid on *Risālah*

Quṭḥbiyyah and *Mullā Jalāl, Ṭibb al-Gharīb, Tathbītu'l Qadamayn*, Commentary on Selection of Ḥadīth from *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Faṣlu'l Khiṭāb, Ḥīr e Mu'āzzam* are his well-known works. Alahazrat's annotations on his *Mūtaqad* is named *Mustanad*. [See #10 in this list].

67. Jumal an-Nūr fi'n Nahy an-Nisā'a ān Ziyārah al-Qubūr

Lustrous Lines on the Prohibition of Women Visiting Graves

Alahazrat was asked about women visiting graves which Mawlānā Fadlu'r Rasūl in *Taṣḥīḥu'l Masāyil* and [Ibn Nujaym] in *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq* have permitted. He replied:

I prefer the contrary opinion and my fatwā has been published in *Tuḥfah e Ḥanaṭiyyah* long ago. I consider it objectionable for women to visit graves of Awliyā'a or others following the master, Shaykh Ibrāhīm Ḥalabī as mentioned in his *Ghunyah*; except to visit the radiant mausoleum of RasūlAllāh ﷺ which is either wājib or almost wājib, based on the exemption mentioned in *Baḥr ar-Rāyiq*. Particularly in our times, when storms of indiscretion are raging – dancing, music, singing are rampant in [what should have been] austere anniversaries,¹⁶⁷ committed by ignoramuses. I find it dislikable for even men to attend such places, let alone those folk whom RasūlAllāh ﷺ termed "delicate glasses" advising Anjashah to recite softly.¹⁶⁸

And as a follow-up explained the ruling in considerable detail.

68. Jurāz al-Dayyānī ālā al-Murtadd al-Qādiyānī

The Sword of the Eternal Lord upon the Qadiyani Apostate

Heretics try to befuddle Muslims by asking inconsequential questions and shift the focus from their main issues. The Qadiyānīs are apostates for dozens of reasons, but still they argue about secondary issues such as the demise of Sayyidunā Yīsā ﷺ. Alahazrat in his inimitable style refutes the Qadiyānī claim and clarifies the ḥadīth they quote to mislead common folk. This is among Alahazrat's last works, if not the last, as it was written in Muḥarram, less than two months of his passing in Ṣafar 1340.

¹⁶⁷ *úrs*: anniversary of Awliyā'a, pl. *aárās*.

¹⁶⁸ Ḥadīth of Muslim #2323, Kitāb al-Fadāyil. Reported by Anas, that RasūlAllāh ﷺ was on a journey and a black slave named Anjashah would sing [driving the camel] and RasūlAllāh ﷺ said: "Slowly, lest you break the glasses"

Poetry

Alahazrat wrote poetry in all three languages – Arabic, Persian and Urdu and employed all forms of poetry. However, his subject was always RasūlAllāh ﷺ or awliyā'a or Islamic topics. The late Prof. Sayyid Masūūd says that the two-part *Ĥadāyiq e Bakhshish* does not contain his entire poetry, but is only an anthology. Some more poems were collected from various sources and published it as the third part posthumously. However, this part had a number of spurious compositions, additions and typos, stirring a minor controversy. Many of his poems would be published in magazines which are now probably lost for ever, and some lengthy poems are in private collections. Similarly, his Arabic and Persian poetry is still scattered. The late professor, who was among the foremost Alahazrat-scholars collected his persian verse and published in a slim volume titled: *Kalām al-Imām*.

Alahazrat was very cautious in his poetry which consisted mostly of eulogies of the Prophet ﷺ and in his own words: "it is the toughest form of poetry, even though people think it is the easiest. It is like walking on the edge of a sword. This is because, if a person exaggerates, he will have elevated him ﷺ to godhood; and if he is reticent, he may diminish his lofty stature." His poetry does not use any word that does not befit the stature of RasūlAllāh ﷺ nor does he use expressions that may appear to contradict the creed of Ahl as-Sunnah.

Once his brother, Mawlānā Ḥasan Ridā showed him a stanza:

khudāyi bhi hoti jo dene ke laayiq
khudā ban ke aāta khudā ka woh bandā
if it was possible to give godhood
that slave of God would come as god.¹⁶⁹

Alahazrat immediately changed it to:

khudāyi bhi hoti jo taḥt e mashiyyat
khudā ban ke aāta khudā ka woh bandā
if godhood were governed by Divine Will
that slave of God would come as god.

¹⁶⁹ This is *muhāl*, based on a *muhāl* premise; as it is said in the verse: "Tell them: if Raḥmān had a son, then I wouldst be the first to worship him." *Sūrah Zukhruf*, 43:81.

In this beautiful replacement, he helped the poet avoid a potential misunderstanding and secondly, he described the Sunni creed that 'godhood' or being god is *muḥāl* for everyone in the creation and also that such things are precluded from Divine Power.

Another couplet, describes his approach to poetry:

***yahi kahti hai bulbul e bāgh e jūnāñ ke razā ki ṭaraḥ koyi siḥr bayāñ
nahiñ hind meñ wāṣiḥ e Shāh e hudā, mujhe shokhiy e tab'a e raza ki qasam***
The nightingale in the garden of paradise says: a wizard like Raza, enchanter
In India, there is none other; says the vivacity of my nature!

In the famous *Qaṣidah Miyrājiyyah*, he says:

***sana-e-sarkar hai wazifah qabul-e-sarkar hai tamanna
na shayiri ki hawas na parwah, rawi thi kya kayse qafiye the***
My sole aim is to praise my Master; and hope that he accepts it
I am not worried about poetry; nor rhyme nor meter.

In one verse he says:

***parah e dil bhi na nikla dil se tuḥfey meñ razā
un sagān e kuu se itnī jaan pyārī wāh wāh!***
You did not take out a part of your heart as a gift, O Raza!
Is your life more beloved to you than the dogs in his 🐕 street?

Every line of his poetry is quotable, and one more memorable verse:

***Allāh! kya jahannam ab bhi na sard hogā
ro ro ke Muṣṭafā ne dariyā bahā diye haiñ***
O Allāh! Shall the fires of hell not quench yet?
Even after Muṣṭafā 🕌 has let flow rivers of tears?

One of his well-known eulogies ends thus:

***kah legi sab kuch unke sana khwāñ ki khāmoshi
chup ho rahā hai kah ke maiñ kyā kyā kahūñ tujhey***
The speechlessness of he, who extols thee is telling;
Lost for words he falls silent, how to describe thee?

CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS

Hijri	Gregorian	Age	Event
1272	1856	*	Birth: 10 th Shawwal 1272 / 14 th June 1856
1276	1860	4	First completion of Qur'ān recitation
1277	1861	5	First speech in Rabi' al-Awwal
1285	1868		First Work in Arabic
1286	1869	13	Graduation – 13 years, 10 months and 5 days
			Begins to Teach and Issue Legal Edicts Under Supervision
1291	1874	19	Marriage
1292	1875	20	Birth of Eldest Son: Mawlānā Ḥāmid Raza Khan
1293	1876	21	Permission to Issue Legal Edicts Independently
1294	1877	22	Tariqah: Initiation and Permission to Initiate (Ba'at/Khilāfat)
			First Urdu Work
1295	1878	23	First Hajj and Visit to the Two Sanctuaries
			Ijāzah in Ḥadīth from Shaykh Aḥmad Zaynī Daḥlān al-Makkī
			Ijāzah in Ḥadīth from Shaykh Ābd ar-Raḥmān al-Sirāj
			Ijāzah in Ḥadīth from Shaykh Ḥusayn Ṣāliḥ Jamāl al-Layl
1298	1881	26	First Persian Work
1307	1889	35	<i>Subḥān as-Subbūḥ</i>
1310	1892	38	Birth of Second Son: Mawlānā Muṣṭafā Raza Khan
1311	1893	39	Attends the Inaugural Session of Nadwatul Ūlamā in Kanpur
1313	1895	41	<i>Al-Faḍl al-Mawhibi</i>
1315	1897	43	Dissociation from the Nadwah Movement

Hijri	Gregorian	Age	Event
1317	1899	45	Refutation of Qadiyāni False Prophet
			Refutation of Nadwah: <i>Fatāwā Al-Ĥaramayn</i>
1318	1900	46	Hailed as Mujaddid/Reviver of the age by Indian Scholars
1320	1902	48	<i>Al-Mustanad Al-Mutamad</i>
1322	1904	50	Establishment of the School Manzar e Islām in Bareilly
			Begins Compilation of <i>Fatāwā Ar-Riḍāwiyyah</i>
1323	1905	51	Second Hajj and Visit to the Two Sanctuaries
1324	1906	52	Ijāzah of Ḥadīth Given to Scholars in Makkah and Madīnah
			Attestations on his Fatwā and <i>Ĥusām al-Ĥaramayn</i>
			<i>Al-Dawlatu'l Makkīyyah</i> and Endorsements
			Return From Hajj
1325	1907	53	Collection of Poetry <i>Ĥadāyiq e Bakhshish</i> in 2 Volumes
1326	1908	54	<i>Jadd al-Mumtār</i> , A gloss on <i>Radd al-Muḥtār</i> in 5 Volumes
			<i>Tamhīd e Īmān</i>
1330	1912	58	Translation of The Qur'ān : <i>Kanzu'l Īmān</i>
1334	1916	62	Refusal to Attend a British Court and Exemption
1336	1917	64	Establishment of Organization: Raza - e - Muṣṭafā
1338	1919	66	Refutation of Albert Porta's Doomsday Prediction
1339	1921	67	Illness and relocation to Nainital in Ramaḍān.
1340	1921	68	Passing Away on 25 th Ṣafar 1340 / 28 th October 1921
<p>Imām Aḥmad Riḍā's age according to the lunar calendar is 68 years and the solar calendar is 65 years. Age computed in this table is according to the lunar calendar.</p>			

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3. *Ĥayāt e Mawlānā Aĥmad Raza Khān* by Dr. Sayyid Masūūd Aĥmad.
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5. *Khulafā e Muĥaddis Baraylawi*, Dr. Sayyid Masūūd Aĥmad.
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7. *Al-Ijāzātu'l Matīnah*
8. Biographical notes by various authors in their introductions to Alahazrat's books of which the following are prominent:
 - a. Preface to *Fatāwā ar-Riḍawīyyah* by Mawlānā Ābdu'l Ĥakīm Sharaf Qādirī.
 - b. Preface to *Qaṣīdatān Rāyiyatān* by Shaykh of Baghdad University
 - c. Foreword to *Al-Dawlatu'l Makkiyyah* by Prof. Sayyid Masūūd Aĥmad.

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وعالم أهل سنة مصطفانا مجدد عصره الفرد الفريد
له أيدٍ بسببها منح الأيدي ورد ردي لصولتها عقيد
وأشجار بسببها إشفار صبح متى يطالع يعد عيد سعيد
حسام حاتم الطفوي بعهد بلا عهد له حد هديد
وعز رضا نقي هاشمي حمان فكيف يوهنه ليد